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CRITICAL, ILLUSTRATIVE, AND LIT. JAL

ON

# THE BOOK OF JOB:

WITH

A New Translation,

AND

AN INTRODUCTORY DISSERTATION.

BY THE

REV. ALBERT BARNES.

*SIXTH EDITION,*

Carefully Revised,

BY THE REV. JOHN CUMMING, D.D.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

**JOB** was a patriarch, a priest, and a prince, in the land **Uz**, who was brought to Christ by no schoolmaster from Sinai, and taught the gospel without the aids of type and ceremony and shadow. He saw through a glass darkly, it is true—a glass darker than ours—but he saw clearly enough to enable him to say, “I know that my Redeemer liveth.”

**Job** is the type of the Christian in the house of mourning. He spent years of weeping under its roof. He sometimes doubted—almost despaired—yet only to rally and recollect his faith, and hope, and experience, and trust again. That old man, seated on those eastern plains, in the grey and misty dawn of Christianity, had much of the life, if less than we have of the light, of Christianity. He is a perfect study—his character was no mere human creation, and his holy thoughts and beautiful expressions are still quoted in our sorrows and breathed over our graves. He felt his afflictions came not from the ground. He therefore drew not his consolations from it. He believed his severe sufferings as sent, and he was still, and prayed. He regarded his early and latter prosperity as given, and he was thankful, and sang psalms. “The patience of **Job**” is proverbial,—“the patience of the saints” should not be less so.

The commentary of **BARNES** on this book is perhaps that successful commentator’s masterpiece. It is more elaborate and learned than his other commentaries—and in all respects worthy of

a good scholar and a sound divine. I have read it with no ordinary delight. It will prove a treasure, I am confident, to thousands, and do more to bring out the beauties, and force, and application of this patriarchal book than any other attempt at explaining the Book of Job. No expense has been spared in illustrating the work with instructive wood-cuts, and no pains have been shunned in producing a correct and faithful reprint; and I am sure that such a work, at such a price, is perhaps unparalleled in the history of modern publications.

JOHN CUMMING, D.D.

ADVERTISEMENT  
TO  
THE SECOND VOLUME.

No one can have read either the text or the commentary of the first volume of this work, without desiring still further to peruse the one and avail himself at the same time of the light reflected from the other. To receive all the benefit resulting from the reading of this patriarchal but inspired poem, it is necessary thoroughly to comprehend its structure, and to understand the position and sentiment peculiar to each of the speakers. Unless these be thoroughly appreciated, the reader may receive a human conjecture for a divine truth, or the cavil of a "miserable comforter" for an eternal and inspired sentiment.

Eliphaz brings charges against Job, obviously untrue, in chap. xxii., as may be proved by referring to Job's reply in chap. xxix. Yet the reflections based on these charges are beautiful and just, and, in all times and circumstances, true. The whole book is a divine dialogue. The misunderstandings and the misinterpretations of the friends of Job are frequently ours also. The deep distress of the patriarch amid tribulation which he could neither understand nor measure—his fears alternating with hopes—his



and at the absence, and his joy at the sensible return, of the  
of the presence of God—and these intermingled with doubts and con-  
fusions—deep despondency and reviving faith—constitute the  
chequered life of the Christian still, and prove that the experience  
of the afflicted patriarch in the land of Uz has a response in the  
conscious life of every believer in the nineteenth century.

Human nature has undergone no essential change since the days  
of Job, and blessed be its Eternal Fountain, the truths of the  
Gospel—the triumphs of faith—the workings of Providence—and  
the omnipotence of grace are, if more clearly revealed, in no respect  
materially changed.

JOHN CUMMING, D.D.

## INTRODUCTION.

IN reference to no part of the Scriptures have so many questions arisen as to the Book of Job. The time of its composition ; the author ; the country where the scene was laid ; the question whether Job was a real person ; the nature and design of the poem ; have been points on which a great variety of opinion has been entertained among expositors, and on which different views still prevail. It is important, in order to a correct understanding of the Book, that all the light should be thrown on these subjects which can be ; and though, amidst the variety of opinion which prevails among men of the highest distinction in learning, absolute certainty cannot be hoped for, yet such advances have been made in the investigation, that on some of these points we may arrive to a high degree of probability.

### I.

#### *The question whether Job was a real person.*

The first question which presents itself in the examination of the Book is, whether Job had a real existence. This has been doubted on such grounds as the following:—(1.) The Book has been supposed by some to have every mark of an allegory. Allegories and parables, it is said, are not uncommon in the Scriptures where *a case is supposed*, and then the narrative proceeds as if it were real. Such an instance, it has been maintained, occurs here, in which the author of the poem designed to illustrate important truths, but instead of stating them in an abstract form, chose to present them in the more graphic and interesting form of a supposed case—in which we are led to sympathize with a sufferer ; to see the ground of the difficulty in the question under discussion in a more affect-

ing manner than could be presented in an abstract form ; and where the argument has all to interest the mind which one has when occurring in real life. (2.) It has been maintained that some of the transactions in the Book *must* have been of this character, or are such as could not have actually occurred. Particularly it has been said that the account of the interview of Satan with JEHOVAH (ch. i. 6—12 ; ii. 1—7,) must be regarded merely as a supposed case, it being in the highest degree improbable that such an interview would occur, and such a conversation be held. (3.) The same conclusion has been drawn from the artificial character of the statements about the possessions of Job, both before and after his trials—statements which appear as if the case were merely supposed, and which would not be likely to occur in reality. Thus we have only round numbers mentioned in enumerating his possessions—as seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses. So, also, there is something artificial in the manner in which the sacred numbers *seven* and *three* are used. He had *seven* thousand sheep, *seven* sons—both before and after his trials ; his *three* friends came and sat down *seven* days and *seven* nights without saying a word to condole with him (ch. xi. 13) ; and both before and after his trials he had *three* daughters. The same artificial and parabolical appearance, it is said, is seen in the fact that after his recovery, his possessions were exactly *doubled*, and he had again in his old age exactly the same number of *seven* sons and *three* daughters which he had before his afflictions. (4.) That the whole narration is allegorical or parabolical, has been further argued from the conduct of the friends of Job. Their sitting down seven days and seven nights without saying anything, when they had come expressly to condole with him, it is said, is a wholly improbable circumstance, and looks as if the whole were a supposed case. (5.) The same thing has been inferred from the manner in which the Book is written. It is of the highest order of poetry. The speeches are most elaborate ; are filled with accurate and carefully prepared argument ; are arranged with great care ; are expressed in the most sententious manner ; embody the results of long and careful observation, and are wholly unlike what would be uttered in unpremeditated and extemporaneous debate. No men, it is said, *talk* in this manner ; nor can it be supposed that beautiful poetry and sublime argument, such as abound in this book, ever fell in animated debate from the lips of men. See Eichhorn, *Einleitung in das Alte Tes.* V. Band. 129—131. From considerations such as these, the historical character of the Book has been doubted, and the whole has been regarded as *a supposed case*, designed to illustrate the great question which the author of the poem proposed to examine.

It is important, therefore, to inquire what reasons there are for believing that such a person as Job lived, and how far the transactions referred to in the Book are to be regarded as historically true. .

(1.) The fact of his existence is expressly declared, and the narrative has all the appearance of being a simple record of an actual occurrence. The first two chapters of the Book, and a part of the last chapter, are simple historical records. The remainder of the Book is indeed poetic, but these portions have none of the characteristics of poetry. There are not to be found in the Bible more simple and plain historical statements than these ; and there are none which, in themselves considered, might not be as properly set aside as allegorical. This fact should be regarded as decisive, unless there is some reason which does not appear on the face of the narrative for regarding it as allegorical.

(2.) The account of the existence of such a man is regarded as historically true by the inspired writers of the Scriptures. Thus in Ezekiel xiv. 14, God says, "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it (the land), they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God." Comp. vs. 16, 20, of the same chapter. Here Job is referred to as a real character, as distinctly as Noah and Daniel, and all the circumstances are just such as they would be on the supposition that he had a real existence. They are alike spoken of as real "men;" as having souls—"they should deliver *but their own souls* by their own righteousness;" as having sons and daughters—"they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters, they only shall be delivered," (ver. 16), and are in all respects mentioned alike as real characters. Of the historic fact that there were such men as Noah and Daniel, there can be no doubt, and it is evident that Ezekiel as certainly regarded Job as a real character as he did either of the others. A parallel passage, which will illustrate this, occurs in Jeremiah xv. 1—"Then said the Lord unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people." Here Moses and Samuel are spoken of as real characters, and there is no doubt of their having existed. Yet they are mentioned in the same manner as Job is in the passage of Ezekiel. In either case, it is incredible that a reference should have been made to a fictitious character. The appeal is one that could have been made only to a real character, and there can be no reasonable doubt that Ezekiel regarded Job as having really existed ; or rather, since it is *God* who speaks and not Ezekiel, that *he* speaks of Job as having actually existed. The same thing is evident from a reference to Job by the Apostle James—"Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord ; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy" (ch. v. 11) ; that is, the happy issue to which the

Lord brought all his trials, showing that he was pitiful to those in affliction, and of great mercy. There can be no doubt that there is reference here to the sufferings of a *real* man, as there is to the *real* compassion which the Lord shows to one in great trials. It is incredible that this sacred writer should have appealed in this instance to the case of one whom *he* regarded as a fictitious character ; and if the views of Ezekiel and James are to be relied on, there can be no doubt that Job had a real existence. Ezekiel mentions him just as he does Noah and Daniel, and James mentions him just as he does Elijah (ch. v. 17) ; and so far as this historical record goes, there is the same evidence of the actual existence of the one as of the other.

(3.) The specifications of places and names in the Book are not such as would occur in an allegory. Had it been merely a "supposed case," to illustrate some great truth, these specifications would have been unnecessary, and would not have occurred. In the acknowledged parables of the Scripture, there are seldom any very minute specifications of names and places. Thus, in the parable of the prodigal son, neither the name of the father, nor of the sons, nor of the place where the scene was laid, is mentioned. So of the nobleman who went to receive a kingdom ; the unjust steward ; the two virgins, and of numerous others. But here we have distinct specifications of a great number of things, which are in no way necessary to illustrate the main truth in the poem. Thus we have not only the name of the sufferer, but the place of his residence mentioned, as if it were well known. We have the names of his friends, and the places of their residence mentioned—"Eliphaz the *Temanite*," and "Bildad the *Shuhite*," and "Zophar the *Naamathite*," and "Elihu the son of Barachel the *Buzite*, of the kindred of Ram." Why are the places of residence of these persons mentioned, unless it be meant to intimate that they were real persons, and not allegorical characters ? In like manner, we have express mention of the Sabeans and the Chaldeans—specifications wholly unnecessary, if not improbable, if the work is an allegory. The single word "robbers" would have answered all the purpose, and would have been such as an inspired writer would have used unless the transaction were real, for an inspired writer would not have charged this offence on any class of men, thus holding them up to lasting reproach, unless an event of this kind had actually occurred. When the Saviour, in the parable of the good Samaritan, mentions a robbery that occurred between Jerusalem and Jericho, the word "thieves," or more properly *robbers*, is the only word used. No names are mentioned, nor is any *class* of men referred to, who would *by* such mention of the name be held up to infamy. Thus also we have the particular statement

respecting the feasting of the sons and daughters of Job : his sending for and admonishing them ; his offering up special sacrifices on their behalf ; the account of the destruction of the oxen, the sheep, the camels, and the house where the sons and daughters of Job were—all statements of circumstances which would not be likely to occur in an allegory. They are such *particular* statements as we expect to find respecting real transactions, and they bear on the face of them the simple impression of truth. This is not the kind of information which we look for in a parable. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, almost the only one spoken by the Saviour where a *name* is mentioned, we have not that of the rich man ; and though the name *Lazarus* is mentioned, yet that is all. We have no account of his family, of his place of residence, of his genealogy, of the time when he lived ; and the name itself is so common that it would be impossible even to suspect whom the Saviour had in his eye, if he had any real individual at all. Far different is this in the account of Job. It is true that, in a romance, or in an extended allegory like the Pilgrim's Progress, we expect a detailed statement of names and places ; but there is no evidence that there is any such extended fictitious narrative in the Bible, and unless the Book of Job be one, there is no such extended allegory.

(4.) The objections urged against this view are not such as to destroy the positive proof of the reality of the existence of Job. The objections which have been urged against the historical truth of the narrative, and which have already been in part alluded to, are principally the following :—

The first is, the account of the interview between God and Satan in chs. 1 and 2. It is alleged that this is so improbable a transaction as to throw an air of fiction over all the historical statements of the book. In reply to this, it may be observed, first, that even if this were not to be regarded as a literal transaction, it does not prove that no such man as Job lived, and that the transactions in regard to *him* were not real. He might have had an existence, and been stripped of his possessions, and subjected to these long and painful trials of his fidelity, even if this *were* a poetic ornament, or merely a figurative representation. But, secondly, it is impossible to *prove* that no such transaction occurred. The existence of such a being as Satan is everywhere recognised in the Scriptures ; the account which is here given of his character accords entirely with the uniform representation of him ; he exerts no power over Job which is not expressly conceded to him ; and it is impossible to prove that he does not even now perform the same things in the trial of good men, which it is said that he did in the case of Job. And even if it be admitted that there is somewhat of poetic state-

ment in the form in which he is introduced, still this does not render the main account improbable and absurd. The Bible, from the necessity of the case, abounds with representations of this sort: and when it is said that God "speaks" to men, that he conversed with Adam, that he spake to the serpent (Gen. iii.), we are not necessarily to suppose that all this is strictly literal, nor does the fact that it is *not* strictly literal invalidate the main facts. There were *results*, or there was a series of *facts* following, as *if* this had been literally true. See Notes on ch. i. 6—12.

A second objection to the historical truth of the transactions recorded in the book is, the poetic character of the work, and the strong improbability that addresses of this kind should ever have been made in the manner here represented. See Eichhorn, Einleit. V. 123, 124. They are of the highest order of poetry; they partake not at all of the nature of extemporaneous effusions; they indicate profound and close thinking, and are such as must have required much time to have prepared them. Especially it is said that it is in the highest degree improbable that Job, in the anguish of his body and mind, should have been capable of giving utterance to poetry and argument of this highly finished character. In regard to this objection, it may be observed, (1,) that even if this were so, and it were to be supposed that the arguments of the various speakers have a poetic character, and were in reality never uttered in the form in which we now have them, still this would not invalidate the evidence which exists of the historic truth of the facts stated about the existence and trials of Job. It might be true that he lived and suffered in this manner, and that a discussion of this character actually occurred, and that substantially these arguments were advanced, though they were afterwards wrought by Job himself, or by some other hand, into the poetic form in which we now have them. Job himself lived after his trials one hundred and forty years, and, in itself considered, there is no improbability in the supposition, that when restored to the vigorous use of his powers, and in the leisure which he enjoyed, he should have thought it worthy to present the argument which he once held on this great subject, in a more perfect form, and to give to it a more poetic cast. In this case, the main historic truth would be retained, and the real argument would in fact be stated—though in a form more worthy of preservation than could be expected to fall extemporaneously from the lips of the speakers. But (2,) all the difficulty may be removed by a supposition which is entirely in accordance with the character of the book and the nature of the case. It is, that the several speeches succeeded each other at such intervals as gave full time for reflection, and for carefully framing the argument. There is no evidence that the whole argument was gone

through with *at one sitting*; there are no proofs that one speech followed immediately on another, or that a sufficient interval of time may not have elapsed to give opportunity for preparation to meet the views which had been suggested by the previous speaker. Everything in the Book bears the marks of the most careful deliberation, and is as free as possible from the hurry and bustle of an extemporaneous debate. The sufferings of Job were evidently of a protracted nature. His friends sat down "seven days and seven nights," in silence before they said anything to him. The whole subject of the debate seems to be arranged with most systematic care and regularity. The speakers succeed each other in regular order in a *series* of arguments—in each of these series following the same method, and no one of them out of his place. No one is ever interrupted while speaking; and no matter how keen and sarcastic his invectives, how torturing his reproaches, how bold or blasphemous what he said was thought to be, he is patiently heard till he has said all that he designed to say; and then all that he said is carefully weighed and considered in the reply. All this looks as if there might have been ample time to arrange the reply before it was uttered, and this supposition, of course, would relieve all the force of this objection. If this be so, then there is no more ground of objection against the supposition that these things were spoken, as it is said they were, than there is about the genuineness of the poems of the Grecian Rhapsodists, composed with a view to public recitation, or to the *Iliad* of Homer, or the *History* of Herodotus, both of which, after they were composed, were recited publicly by their authors at Athens. No one can *prove* certainly that the several persons named in the book—Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, and Elihu—were incompetent to compose the speeches which are severally assigned to them, or that all the time necessary for such a composition was not taken by them. Unless this can be done, the objection of its improbability, so confidently urged by Eichhorn (*Einleit.* v. 123, *seq.*), and defended by Noyes (*Intro.*, pp. xx. xxi.), where he says that "the supposition that so beautiful and harmonious a whole, every part of which bears the stamp of the highest genius, was the casual production of a man brought to the gates of the grave by a loathsome disease, of three or four friends who had come to comfort him in his affliction, all of them expressing their thoughts in poetical and measured language; that the Deity was actually heard to speak half an hour in the midst of a violent storm; and that the consultations in the heavenly world were actual occurrences, is too extravagant to need refutation," is an objection really of little force.

A third objection has been derived from the *round* and *doubled* numbers which occur in the book, and the artificial character which



the whole narrative seems to assume on that account. It is alleged that this is wholly an unusual and improbable occurrence ; and that the whole statement appears as *if* it were a fictitious narrative. Thus Job's possessions of oxen and camels and sheep are expressed in round numbers ; one part of these is exactly the double of another ; and what is more remarkable still, all these are exactly *doubled* on his restoration to health. He had the same number of sons and the same number of daughters after his trial which he had before, and the number of each was what was esteemed among the Hebrews as a sacred number.—In regard to this objection, we may observe, (1.) That as to the *round* numbers, this is no more than what constantly occurs in historical statements. Nothing is more common in the enumeration of armies, of the people of a country, or of herds and flocks, than such statements. (2.) In regard to the fact that the possessions of Job are said to have been exactly “doubled” after his recovery from his calamities, it is not necessary to suppose that this was in all respects *literally* true. Nothing forbids us to suppose that, from the gifts of friends and other causes, the possessions of Job came so near to being just twice what they were before his trials, as to justify this general statement. In the statement itself, there is nothing improbable. Job lived an hundred and forty years after his trials. If he had then the same measure of prosperity which he had before, and with the assistance of his friends to enable him to *begin* life again, there is no improbability in the supposition that these possessions would be doubled.

These are substantially all the objections which have been urged against the historical character of the book, and if they are not well founded, then it follows that it should be regarded as historically true that such a man actually lived, and that he passed through the trials which are here described. How far, if at all, the licence of poetry has been employed in the composition of the book will be considered more particularly in another part of this Introduction, section 6. A more extended statement of these objections, and a refutation of them, may be found in the following works :—Warburton's *Divine Legation of Moses*, vol. v. p. 298, *seq.*, ed. 8vo, London, 1811 ; Prof. Lee on *Job*, Intro., section 11 ; and Magie on *Atonement and Sacrifice*, p. 212, *seq.*, ed. New-York, 1813. It should be said, however, that not a few writers admit that such a man as Job lived, and that the book has an historical basis, while they regard the work itself as in the main poetic. In the view of such critics, the poet, in order to illustrate the great truth which he proposed to consider, made use of a tradition respecting the sufferings of a well known person of distinction, and gave to the whole argument the high poetic cast which it has now. This supposition is in accordance with the methods fre-

quently adopted by epic and tragic poets, and which is commonly followed by writers of romance. This is the opinion of Eichhorn, *Einleitung* V. section 638.

## II.

*The question where Job lived.*

In chapter i. 1, it is said that Job dwelt "in the land of Uz." The only question, then, to be settled in ascertaining where he lived, is, if possible, to determine where this place was. From the manner in which the record is made ("*the land of Uz*,") it would seem probable that this was a region of country of some considerable extent, and also that it derived its name from some man of that name who had settled there. The word Uz (עֻז), according to Gesenius, means a light, sandy soil; and if the name was given to the country with reference to this quality of the soil, it would be natural to fix on some region remarkable for its barrenness—a waste place, or a desert. Gesenius supposes that Uz was in the northern part of Arabia Deserta—a place lying between Palestine and the Euphrates, called by Ptolemy Αἰσιταί (*Aisitai*). This opinion is defended by Rosenmüller (Proleg.); and is adopted by Spanheim, Bochart, Lee, Umbreit, Noyes, and the authors of the *Universal history*. Dr. Good supposes that the Uz here referred to was in Arabia Petræa, on the south-western coast of the Dead Sea, and that Job and all his friends referred to in the poem were Idumeans. *Introductory Dissertation*, section 1., pp. vii—xii. Eichhorn also supposes that the scene is laid in Idumea, and that the author of the poem shows that he had a particular acquaintance with the history, customs, and productions of Egypt. *Einleit.* section 638. Bochart (in *Phaleg et Canaan*), Michaelis (*Spicileg. Geog. Hebrae.*), and Ilgen (*Jobi, Antiquis, carminis Heb. natura et indoles*, p. 91), suppose that the place of his residence was the valley of Guta near Damascus, regarded as the most beautiful of the four Paradises of the Arabians. For a description of this valley, see Eichhorn, *Einleit.* V. s. 134. The word עֻז (*Uz*) occurs only in the following places in the Hebrew Bible:—Gen. x. 23; xxii. 21; xxxvi. 28; and 1 Chron. i. 17, 42; in each of which places it is the name of a man; and in Jer. xxv. 20; Lam. iv. 21, and in Job i. 1, where it is applied to a country. The only circumstances which furnish any probability in regard to the place where Job lived, are the following:—

(1.) Those which enable us to determine with some probability where *the family* of Uz was settled, who not improbably gave his name to the country—as Sheba, and Seba, and Tema, and Cush, and Misraim, and others, did to the countries where they settled.

In Gen. x. 23, Uz (יֻז) is mentioned as a grandson of Shem. In Gen. xxii. 21, an *Uz* (English Bible *Huz*) is mentioned as the son of Nahor, brother of Abraham, undoubtedly a different person from the one mentioned in Gen. x. 23. In Gen. xxxvi. 28, an individual of this name is mentioned among the descendants of Esau. In 1 Chron. i. 17, the name occurs among the "sons of Shem;" and in ver. 48, of the same chapter, the same name occurs among the descendants of Esau. So far, therefore, as the *name* is concerned, it may have been derived from one of the family of Shem, or from one who was a contemporary with Abraham, or from a somewhat remote descendant of Esau. It will be seen in the course of this Introduction, that there is strong improbability that the name was given to the country because it was settled by either of the two latter, as such a supposition would bring down the time when Job lived to a later period than the circumstances recorded in his history will allow, and it is therefore probable that the name was conferred in honour of the grandson of Shem. This fact, of itself, will do *something* to determine the place. Shem lived in Asia, and we shall find that the settlements of his descendants originally occupied the country somewhere in the vicinity of the Euphrates. Gen. x. 21—30. In Gen. x. 23, *Uz* is mentioned as one of the sons of *Aram*, who gave name to the country known as *Aramea*, or *Syria*, and from whom the Arameans descended. Their original residence, it is supposed, was near the river Kir, or Cyrus, whence they were brought, at some period now unknown, by a deliverance resembling that of the children of Israel from Egypt, and placed in the regions of Syria. See Amos ix. 7. The inhabitants of Syria and Mesopotamia are always called by Moses *Arameus*; as they had their seat in and near Mesopotamia, it is probable that *Uz* was located also not far from that region. We should, therefore, naturally be led to look for the country of *Uz* somewhere in that vicinity. In Gen. x. 30, it is further said of the sons of Shem, that "their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest unto Sephar, *a mount of the East*;" a statement which corresponds with what is said of Job himself, that he was "the greatest of all the men of *the East*," (ch. i. 3.), manifestly implying that he was an inhabitant of the country so called. Various opinions have been entertained of the places where Mesha and Sephar were. The opinion of Michaelis is the most probable (Spicileg. pt. 11, p. 214), "that Mesha is the region around Passora, which the later Syrians called *Maishon*, and the Greeks *Mesene*." Under these names they included the country on the Euphrates and the Tigris, between Silencia and the Persian Gulf. Abulfeda mentions in this region two cities not far from Passora, called *Maisan*, and *Mushan*. Here, then, was probably the north-

eastern border of the district inhabited by the Joktanites. The name of the opposite limit, *Sephar*, signifies in the Chaldee *shore* or *coast*, and is probably the western part of Yemen, along the Arabian Gulf, now called by the Arabs Tehamah. The range of high and mountainous country between these two borders, Moses calls "the Mount of the East," or eastern mountains. It is also called by the Arabs *Djebal*—i. e., *mountains*, to the present day. See Rosenmuller's *Alterthumskunde*, iii. 163, 164.

The supposition that some portion of this region is denoted by the country where Uz settled, and is the place where Job resided, is strengthened by the fact, that many of the persons and tribes mentioned in the book resided in this vicinity. Thus it is probable that Eliphaz the Temanite had his residence there. See Notes on ch. ii. 11. The Sabeans probably dwelt not very remote from that region (Notes on ch. i. 15); the Chaldeans we know had their residence there (Notes ch. i. 17), and this supposition will agree well with what is said of the tornado that came from the "wilderness," or desert. See Notes on ch. i. 19. The residence of Job was so near to the Chaldeans and the Sabeans, that he could be reached in their usual predatory excursions—a fact that better accords with the supposition that his residence was in some part of Arabia Deserta, than that it was in Idumea.

(2.) This country is referred to in two places by Jeremiah, which may serve to aid us in determining its location. Lam. iv. 21.

"Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom,  
That dwellest in the land of Uz;  
The cup shall pass through unto thee;  
Thou shalt be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked."

At first view, perhaps, this passage would indicate that the land of Uz was a part of Edom, yet it more properly indicates that the land of Uz was not a part of that land, but that the Edomites or Idumeans had gained possession of a country which did not originally belong to them. Thus the prophet speaks of the "daughter of Edom," not as dwelling in her own country properly, but as dwelling "in the land of Uz,"—in a foreign country, of which she had somehow obtained possession. The country of Edom, properly, was Mount Seir and the vicinity, south of the Dead Sea; but it is known that the Edomites subsequently extended their boundaries, and that at one period Bozrah, on the east of the Dead Sea, in the country of Moab, was their capital. See the Analysis of ch. xxxiv. of Isaiah, and Notes on Isa. xxxiv. 6. It is highly probable that Jeremiah refers to the period when the Idumeans, having secured these conquests, and made this foreign city their capital, is represented as dwelling there. If so, according to this

passage in Lamentations, we should naturally look for the land of Uz somewhere in the countries to which the conquests of the Edomites extended—and these conquests were chiefly to the *east* of their own land. A similar conclusion will be derived from the other place where the name occurs in Jeremiah. It is in ch. xxv. 20, seq. “And all the mingled people, *and all the kings of the land of Uz*, and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and Askelon, and Azzah, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod, *and Edom*, and Moab, and the children of Ammon,” &c. Two things are apparent here. One is, that the country of Uz was distinct from the land of Edom, since they are mentioned as separate nations; the other is, that it was a country of some considerable extent, since it is mentioned as being under several “kings.” There is, indeed, in this reference to it no allusion to its situation; but it is mentioned as being in the time of Jeremiah well known.

(3.) The same thing is evident from the manner in which the residence of Job is spoken of in ch. i. 3. He is there said to have been the “greatest of all *the men of the East*.” This implies that his residence was in the land which was known familiarly as the country of the East. It is true, indeed, that we have not yet determined where the poem was composed, and of course do not know precisely what the author would understand by this phrase; but the expression has a common signification in the Scriptures, as denoting the country east of Palestine. The land of Idumea, however, was directly south; and we are, therefore, naturally led to look to some other place as the land of Uz. Comp. Notes on ch. i. 3. The expression “the East,” as used in the Bible, would in no instance naturally lead us to look to Idumea.

(4.) The LXX render the word *Uz* in ch. i. 1, by Ἀσίτις, *Asitis*—a word which seems to have been formed from the Hebrew *אֲשִׁיטִי* *Utz*, or *Uz*. Of course, their translation gives no intimation of the place referred to. But Ptolemy (Geog. Lib. v.) speaks of a tribe or nation in the neighbourhood of Babylon, whom he calls Ἀσσίται, *Ausitæ*, (or, as it was perhaps written, Αἰσίται,) the same word which is used by the LXX in rendering the word *Uz*. These people are placed by Ptolemy in the neighborhood of the Cauchebeni—ὑπὸ μὲν τοῖς Καυκαβηνοῖς—and he speaks of them as separated from Chaldea by a ridge of mountains. See Rosenm. Proleg. p. 27. This location would place Job so near to the Chaldeans, that the account of their making an excursion into this country (ch. i. 17) would be entirely probable. It may be added, also, that in the same neighborhood we find a town called *Sabas* (Σάβας) in Diodorus Sic. Lib. iii. section 46. Prof. Lee, p. 32. These circumstances render it probable that the residence of the Patriarch was west of

Chaldea, and somewhere in the northern part of Arabia Deserta, between Palestine, Idumea, and the Euphrates.

(5.) The monuments and memorials of Job still preserved or referred to in the East, may be adduced as some slight evidence of the fact that such a man as Job lived, and as an indication of the region in which he resided. It is true that they depend on mere tradition ; but monuments are not erected to the memory of any who are not *supposed* to have had an existence, and traditions usually have some basis in reality. Arabian writers always make mention of Job as a real person, and his pretended grave is shown in the East to this day. It is shown, indeed, in six different places: but this is no evidence that all that is said of the existence of such a man is fabulous, any more than the fact that seven cities contended for the honour of the birth of Homer, is an evidence that there was no such man. The most celebrated tomb of this kind is that of the Trachonitis, towards the springs of the Jordan. It is situated between the cities still bearing the names of Teman, Shuah, and Naama—(Wemyss) ; though there is every reason to believe that these names have been given rather with reference to the fact that that was supposed to be his residence, than that they were the names of the places referred to in the book of Job. One of these tombs was shown to Niebuhr. He says (Reisebeschreib. i. 466)—“Two or three hours east of Sanda is a great mosque, in which, according to the opinion of the Arabs who reside there, the sufferer Job lies buried.” “On the eastern limits of Arabia, they showed me the grave of Job, close to the Euphrates, and near the Helleh, one hour south from Babylon.” It is of importance to remark here only that all of these tombs are *without* the limits of Idumea. Among the Arabians there are numerous traditions respecting Job, many of them indeed stories that are entirely ridiculous, but all showing the firm belief prevalent in Arabia that there was such a man. See Sale’s Koran, vol. ii. pp. 174, 322 ; Magie on Atonement and Sacrifice, pp. 366, 367 ; and D’Herbelot, Bibli. Orient. tom. i. pp. 75, 76, 432, 438, as quoted by Magie.

(6.) The present belief of the Arabians may be referred to as corroborating the results to which we have approximated in this inquiry, that the residence of Job was not in Idumea, but was in some part of Arabia Deserta, lying between Palestine and the Euphrates. The Rev. Eli Smith stated to me (Nov. 1840), that there was still a place in the Houran called by the Arabians, *Uz* ; and that there is a tradition among them that that was the residence of Job. It is north-east of Bozrah. Bozrah was once the capital of Idumea (Notes on Isa. xxxiv. 6), though it was situated without the limits of their natural territory. If this tradition is well

founded, then Job was not probably an Idumean. There is nothing that renders the tradition improbable, and the course of the investigation conducts us, with a high degree of probability, to the conclusion that this was the residence of Job. On the residence of Job and his friends. consult also Abrahami Peritsol Itinera Mundi, in Ugolin, Thes. Sac. vii. pp. 103—106.

### III.

#### *The time when Job lived.*

\* There has been quite as much uncertainty in regard to the *time* when Job lived, as there has been in regard to the place where.—It should be observed here, that this question is not necessarily connected with the inquiry when the book was composed, and will not be materially affected, whether we suppose it to have been composed by Job himself, by Moses, or by a later writer. Whenever the book was composed, if at a later period than that in which the patriarch lived, the author would naturally conceal the marks of his own time, by referring only to such customs and opinions as prevailed in the age when the events were supposed to have occurred.

On this question, we cannot hope to arrive at absolute certainty. It is remarkable that neither the genealogical record of the family of Job nor that of his three friends is given. The only record of the kind occurring in the book, is that of Elihu (ch. xxxii. 2), and this is so slight as to furnish but little assistance in determining when he lived. The only circumstances which occur in regard to this question, are the following ; and they will serve to settle the question with sufficient probability, as it is a question on which no important results can depend.

(1.) The age of Job. According to this, the time when he lived would occur somewhere between the age of Terah, the father of Abraham, and Jacob, or about one thousand eight hundred years before Christ, and about six hundred years after the deluge. For the reasons of this opinion, see the Notes on ch. xlii. 16. This estimate cannot pretend to entire accuracy, but it has a high degree of probability. If this estimate be correct, he lived not far from four hundred years before the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt, and before the giving of the law on Mount Sinai.—Comp. Notes on Acts vii. 6.

(2.) As a slight confirmation of this opinion, we may refer to the traditions in reference to the time when he lived. The account which is appended to the Septuagint, that he was a son of Zare, one of the sons of Esau, and the fifth in descent from Abraham,

may be seen in the Notes on ch. xlii. 16. A similar account is given at the close of the Arabic translation of Job, so similar that the one has every appearance of having been copied from the other, or of having had a common origin. "Job dwelt in the land of Uz, between the borders of Edom, and Arabia, and was before called Jobab. He married a foreign wife, whose name was Anun. Job was himself a son of Zare, one of the sons of Esau; and his mother's name was Basra, and he was the sixth in descent from Abraham. But of the kings who reigned in Edom, the first who reigned over the land was Balak, the son of Beor; and the name of his city was Danaba. And after him Jobab, who is called Job; and after him the name of him who was prince of the land of Teman; and after him his son Barak, he who slew and put to flight Madian in the plain of Moab, and the name of his city was Gjates. And of the friends of Job who came to meet him, was Elifaz, of the sons of Esau, the king of the Temanites." These traditions are worthless, except as they show the prevalent belief when these translations were made, that Job lived somewhere near the time of the three great Hebrew patriarchs.

A nearly uniform tradition also has concurred in describing this as about the age in which he lived. The Hebrew writers generally concur in describing him as living in the days of Isaac and Jacob. *Wemys*. Eusebius places him about two "ages" before Moses. The opinions of the Eastern nations generally concur in assigning this as the age in which he lived.

(3.) From the representations in the book itself, it is clear that he lived before the departure from Egypt. This is evident from the fact that there is no direct allusion either to that remarkable event, or to the series of wonders which accompanied it, or to the journey to the land of Canaan. This silence is unaccountable on any other supposition than that he lived before it occurred, for two reasons. One is, that it would have furnished the most striking illustration occurring in history, of the interposition by God in delivering his friends and in destroying the wicked, and was such an illustration as Job and his friends could not have failed to refer to, in defence of their opinions, if it were known to them; and the other is, that this event was the great store-house of argument and illustration for all the sacred writers, after it occurred. The deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and the divine interposition in conducting the nation to the promised land, are constantly referred to by the sacred writers. They derive from those events their most magnificent descriptions of the power and majesty of Jehovah.—They refer to them as illustrating his character and government. They appeal to them in proof that he was the friend and protector of his people, and that he would destroy his foes. They draw



from them their most sublime and beautiful poetic images, and are never weary with calling the attention of the people to their obligation to serve God, on account of his merciful and wonderful interposition. The very point of the argument in this book is one that would be better illustrated by that deliverance, than by any other event which ever occurred in history; and as this must have been known to the inhabitants of the country where Job lived, it is inexplicable that there is no allusion to these transactions, if they had already occurred.

It is clear, therefore, that even if the book was written at a later period than the exode from Egypt, the author of the poem *meant* to represent the patriarch as having lived before that event. He has described him as one who was ignorant of it, and in such circumstances, and with such opinions, that he could not have failed to refer to it, if he was believed to have lived after that event. It is equally probable that Job lived before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. This event occurred in the vicinity of the country where he lived, and he could not have been ignorant of it. It was, moreover, a case not less in point in the argument than the deliverance from Egypt was; and it is not conceivable that a reference to so signal a punishment on the wicked by the direct judgment of the Almighty, would have been omitted in an argument of the nature of that in this book. It was the *very point* maintained by the friends of Job, that God interposed by direct judgments to cut off the wicked; and the world never furnished a more appropriate illustration of this than had occurred in their own neighbourhood, on the supposition that the calamities of Job occurred *after* that event.

(4.) The same thing is apparent also from the absence of all allusion to the Jewish rites, manners, customs, religious ceremonies, priesthood, festivals, fasts, Sabbaths, &c. There will be occasion in another part of this introduction (section 4. iii.) to inquire how far there is *in fact* such a want of allusion to these things. All that is now meant is, that there is an obvious and striking want of such allusions as we should expect to find made by one who lived at a later period, and who was familiar with the customs and religious rites of the Jews. The plan of the poem, it may be admitted, indeed, did not demand any frequent allusion to these customs and rites, and may be conceded to be adverse to such an allusion, even if they were known; but it is hardly conceivable that there should not have been some reference to them of more marked character than is now found. Even admitting that Job was a foreigner, and that the author meant to preserve this impression distinctly, yet his residence could not have been far from the confines of the Jewish people; and one who manifested such

decided principles of piety towards God as he did, could not but have had a strong sympathy with that people, and could not but have referred to their rites in an argument so intimately pertaining to the government of JEHOVAH. The representation of Job, and the allusions in the book, are in all respects such as *would* occur on the supposition that he lived before the peculiar Jewish polity was instituted.

(5.) The same thing is manifest from another circumstance. The religion of Job is of the same kind which we find prevailing in the time of Abraham, and before the institution of the Jewish system. It is a religion of sacrifices, but without any officiating priest.—Job himself presents the offering, as the head of the family, in behalf of his children and his friends. Ch. i. 5; xlii. 8. There is no priest appointed for this office; no temple, tabernacle, or sacred place of any kind; no consecrated altar. Now this is just the kind of religion which we find prevailing among the patriarchs, until the giving of the law on Mount Sinai; and hence it is natural to infer that Job lived anterior to that event. Thus we find Noah building an altar to the Lord, and offering sacrifices, Gen. viii. 20; Abraham offering a sacrifice himself in the same manner, Gen. xv. 9—11, comp. Gen. xii. 1—13; and this was undoubtedly the earliest form of religion. Sacrifices were offered to God, and the father of a family was the officiating priest.

These circumstances combined leave little doubt as to the time when Job lived. They concur in fixing the period as not remote from the age of Abraham, and there is no other period of history in which they will be found to unite. No question of great importance, however, depends on settling this question; and these circumstances determine the time with sufficient accuracy for all that is necessary, in an exposition of the book.

#### IV.

##### *The Author of the Book.*

A question of more vital importance than those which have been already considered, relates to the authorship of the book. As the name of the author is nowhere mentioned, either in the book itself or elsewhere in the Bible, it is of course impossible to arrive at absolute certainty; and after all that has been written on it, it is still, and must be, a point of mere conjecture. Still the question, as it is commonly discussed, opens a wide range of inquiry, and claims an investigation. If the name of the author cannot be discovered with certainty, it may be possible at least to decide with some degree of probability at what period of the world it was committed to writing,

and perhaps with a degree of probability that may be sufficiently satisfactory, by whom it was done.

The first inquiry that meets us in the investigation of this point is, whether the whole book was composed by the same author, or whether the historical parts were added by a later hand. The slightest acquaintance with the book is sufficient to show, that there are in it two essentially different kinds of style—the poetic and prosaic. The body of the work, ch. iii.—xlii. 1—6, is poetry; the other portion, ch. i., ix., and xlii. 7—17, is prose. The genuineness of the latter has been denied by many eminent critics, and particularly by De Wette, who regard it as the addition of some later hand. Against the prologue and the epilogue De Wette urges, “that the perfection of the work requires their rejection, because they solve the problem which is the subject of the discussion, by the idea of trial and compensation; whereas it was the design of the author to solve the question through the idea of entire submission on the part of man to the wisdom and power of God.” See Noyes, Intro., pp. xxi. xxii.

To this objection it may be replied, (1.) That we are to learn the view of the author only by *all* that he has presented to us. It may have been a part of his plan to exhibit just this view—not to present an abstract argument, but such an argument in connexion *with a real case*, and to make it more vivid by showing an actual instance of calamity falling upon a pious man, and by a state of remarkable prosperity succeeding it. The presumption is, that the author of the poem designed to throw all the light possible on a very obscure and dark subject; and in order to that, a statement of the *facts* which preceded and followed the argument seems indispensable. (2.) Without the statement in the conclusion of the prosperity of Job after his trials, the argument of the book is incomplete. The main question is not solved. God is introduced in the latter chapters, not as solving by explicit statements the questions that had given so much perplexity, but as showing the duty of unqualified submission. But when this is followed by the historical statement of the return of Job to a state of prosperity, of the long life which he afterwards enjoyed, and of the wealth and happiness which attended him for nearly a century and a half, the objections of his friends and his own difficulties are abundantly met, and the conclusion of the whole shows that God is not regardless of his people, but that, though they pass through severe trials, still they are the objects of his tender care. (3.) Besides, the prologue is necessary in order to understand the character, the language and the arguments of Job. In the harsh and irreverent speeches which he sometimes makes, in his fearful imprecations in ch. iii. on the day of his birth, and in the outbreaks of impatience which we

meet with, it would be impossible for us to have the sympathy for the sufferer which the author evidently desired we should have, or to understand the depth of his woes, unless we had a view of his previous prosperity, and of the causes of his trials, and unless we had the assurance that he had been an eminently pious and upright man. As it is, we are prepared to sympathize with a sufferer of eminent rank, a man of previous wealth and prosperity, and one who had been brought into these circumstances *for the very purpose of trial*. We become at once interested to know how human nature will act in such circumstances, nor does the interest ever flag. Under these sudden and accumulated trials, we admire, at first, the patience and resignation of the sufferer; then, under the protracted and intolerable pressure, we are not surprised to witness the outbreak of his feelings in ch. iii.; and then we watch with **great** interest and without weariness the manner in which he meets the ingenious arguments of his "friends," to prove that he had always been a hypocrite, and their cutting taunts and reproaches. It would be impossible to keep up this interest in the argument unless we were prepared for it by the historical statement in the introductory chapters. It should be added, that any supposition that these chapters are by a later hand, is entirely conjectural—no authority for any such belief being furnished by the ancient versions, MSS., or traditions. These remarks, however, do not forbid us to suppose, that if the book were composed by Job himself, the last two verses in ch. xlii., containing an account of his age and death, were added by a later hand—as the account of the death of Moses (Deut. xxxiv.) must be supposed not to be the work of Moses himself, but of some later inspired writer.

If there is, therefore, reason to believe that the whole work, substantially as we have it now, was committed to writing by the same hand, the question arises, whether there are any circumstances by which it can be determined with probability who the author was. On no question, almost, pertaining to sacred criticism, have there been so many contradictory opinions as on this. Lowth, Magee, Prof. Lee, and many others, regard it as the work of Job himself. Lightfoot and others ascribe it to Elihu; some of the Rabbinical writers, as also Kennicott, Michaelis, Dathe, and Good, to Moses; Luther, Grotius, and Doederlin, to Solomon; Umbreit and Noyes to some writer who lived not far from the period of the Jewish captivity; Rosenmüller, Spanheim, Reimar, Stuedlin, and C. F. Richter, suppose that it was composed by some Hebrew writer about the time of Solomon; Warburton regards it as the production of Ezra; Herder (Heb. Poetry, i. 110) supposes that it was written by some ancient Idumean, probably Job himself, and was obtained by David in his conquests over Idumea. He supposes

that in the later writings of David he finds traces of his having imitated the style of this ancient book.

It would be uninteresting and profitless to go into an examination of the reasons suggested by these respective authors for their various opinions. Instead of this, I propose to state the leading considerations which have occurred in the examination of the book itself, and of the reasons which have been suggested by these various authors, which may enable us to form a probable opinion. If the investigation shall result only in adding one more conjecture to those already formed, still it will have the merit of stating about all that seems to be of importance in enabling us to form an opinion in the case.

1. The first circumstance that would occur to one in estimating the question about the authorship of the book, is the foreign cast of the whole work—the fact that it differs from the usual style of the Hebrew compositions. The customs, allusions, figures of speech, and modes of thought, to one who is familiar with the writings of the Hebrews, have a foreign air, and are such as evidently show that the speakers lived in some other country than Judea. There is, indeed, a common Oriental cast diffused over the whole work, enough to distinguish it from all the modes of composition in the Occidental world; but there is, also, scarcely less to distinguish it from the compositions which we know had their origin among the Hebrews. The style of thought, and the general cast of the book, are Arabian. The allusions, the metaphors, the illustrations, the reference to historical events and to prevailing customs, are not such as an Hebrew would make; certainly not, unless in the very earliest periods of history, and before the character of the nation became so formed as to distinguish it characteristically from their brethren in the great family of the East. Arabian deserts; streams failing from drought; wadys filled in the winter and dry in the summer; moving hordes and caravans that come regularly to the same place for water; dwellings of tents easily plucked up and removed; the dry and stunted shrubbery of the desert; the roaring of lions and other wild beasts; periodical rains; trees planted on the verge of running streams; robbers and plunderers that rise before day, and make their attack in the early morning; the rights, authority, and obligation of the *Goel*, or avenger of blood; the claims of hospitality; the formalities of an Arabic court of justice, are the images which are kept constantly before the mind. Here the respect due to an Emir; the courtesy of manners which prevails among the more elevated ranks in the Arabic tribes; the profound attention which listens to the close while one is speaking, and which never interrupts him (*Herder* i. 81), so remarkable among well-bred Orientals at the present day, appear everywhere. It is true,

that many of these things may find a resemblance in the undoubted Hebrew writings—for some of them are the common characteristics of the Oriental people—but still, no one can doubt that they abound in this book more than in any other in the Bible, and that, as we shall see more particularly soon, they are unmixed, as they are elsewhere, with what is indubitably of Hebrew origin. In connexion with this, it may be remarked that there are in the book an unusual number of words whose root is found now only in the Arabic, and which are used in a sense not common in the Hebrew, but usual in the Arabic. Of this all will be convinced who, in interpreting the book, avail themselves of the light which Gesenius has thrown on numerous words from the Arabic, or who consult the Lexicon of Castell, or who examine the Commentaries of Schultens and Lee. That more importance has been attached to this by many critics than facts will warrant, no one can deny; but as little can it be denied that more aid can be derived from the Arabic language in interpreting this book, than in the exposition of any other part of the Bible. On this point Gesenius makes the following remarks:—"Altogether there is found in the book much resemblance to the Arabic, or which can be illustrated from the Arabic; but this is either Hebrew, and pertains to the poetic diction, or it is at the same time Aramaish, and was borrowed by the poet from the Aramaean language, and appears here not as Aramaean, but as Arabic. Yet there is not here proportionably more than in other poetic books and portions of books. It would be unjust to infer from this that the author of this book had any immediate connexion with Arabia, or with Arabic literature." *Geschichte der. hebr. Sprache und Schrift*, S. 33. The *fact* of the Arabic cast of the work is conceded by Gesenius in the above extract; the inferences in regard to the connexion of the book with Arabia and with Arabic literature which may be derived from this, are to be determined from other circumstances. *Comp. Eichhorn, Einleitung*, v. S. 163, fgg.

2. A second consideration that may enable us to determine the question respecting the authorship of the book is, the fact that there are in it numerous undoubted allusions to events which occurred *before* the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt, the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, and the establishment of the Jewish institutions. The point of this remark is, that if we shall find such allusions, and also that there are no allusions to events occurring after that period, this is a circumstance which may throw some light on the authorship. It will at least enable us to fix, with some degree of accuracy, the time when the book was committed to writing. Now that there are manifest allusions to events occurring *before* that period, the following references will show.

Job x. 9—"Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me to dust again?" Here there is an allusion in almost so many words to the statements in Gen. ii. 7; iii. 19, respecting the manner in which man was formed,—showing that Job was familiar with the account of the creation of man. Job xxvii. 3—"All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils." Ch. xxxiii. 4—"The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." Ch. xxxii. 8—"But there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Here there are undoubted allusions, also, to the manner in which man was formed—(comp. Gen. ii. 7)—allusions which show that the *fact* must have been made known to the speakers by tradition, since it is not such a fact as man would readily arrive at by reasoning. The imbecility and weakness of man also, are described in terms which imply an acquaintance with the manner in which he was created. "How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth;" ch. iv. 19. In ch. xxxi. 33, there is probably an allusion to the fact that Adam attempted to hide himself from God when he had eaten the forbidden fruit. "If I covered my transgressions as Adam." For the reasons for supposing that this refers to Adam, see Notes on the verse. In ch. xxii. 15, 16, there is a manifest reference to the deluge. "Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden? which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflowed with a flood?" See the Notes on that passage. In connexion with this we may refer also to the fact that the description of the modes of worship, and the views of religion, found in this book, show an acquaintance with the form in which worship was offered to God before the Exode from Egypt. They are of precisely such a character as we find in the time of Abel, Noah, and Abraham. These events are not such as would occur to one who was not familiar with the historical facts recorded in the first part of the book of Genesis. They are not such as would result from a train of reasoning, but could only be derived from the knowledge of those events which would be spread over the East at that early period of the world. They demonstrate that the work was composed by one who had had an opportunity to become acquainted with what is now recorded as the Mosaic history of the creation, and of the early events of the world.

3. There are no such allusions to events occurring *after* the Exode from Egypt, and the establishment of the Jewish institutions. As this is a point of great importance in determining the question respecting the authorship of the book, and as it has been confidently asserted that there *are* such allusions, and as they have been

made the basis of an argument to prove that the book had an origin as late as Solomon or even as Ezra, it is of importance to examine this point with attention. The point is, that there are no such allusions as a Hebrew would make after the Exode; or in other words, there is nothing in the book itself which would lead us to conclude that it was composed *after* the departure from Egypt. A few remarks will show the truth and the bearing of this observation.

The Hebrew writers were remarkable above most others for allusions to the events of their own history. The dealings of God with their nation had been so peculiar, and they were so much imbued with the conviction that the events of their own history furnished proofs of the divine favor towards their nation, that we find in their writings a constant reference to what had happened to them as a people. Particularly the deliverance from Egypt, the passage of the Red Sea, the giving of the law on Sinai, the journey in the wilderness, the conquest of the land of Canaan, and the destruction of their enemies, constituted an unfailing depository of argument and illustration for their writers in all ages. All their poetry written subsequent to these events, abounds with allusions to them. Their prophets refer to them for topics of solemn appeal to the nation; and the remembrance of these things warms the heart of piety, and animates the song of praise in the temple-service. Under the sufferings of the "captivity," they are cheered by the fact that God delivered them once from much more galling oppression; and in the times of freedom, their liberty is made sweet by the memory of what their fathers suffered in the "house of bondage."

Now it is as undeniable as it is remarkable, that in the book of Job there are no such allusions to these events as a Hebrew would make. There is no allusion to Moses; no indisputable reference to their bondage in Egypt, to the oppressive acts of Pharaoh, to the destruction of his army in the Red Sea, to the rescue of the children of Israel, to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, to the perils of the wilderness, to their final settlement in the promised land. There is no reference to the tabernacle, to the ark, to the tables of the law, to the institution and the functions of the priesthood, to the cities of refuge, or to the peculiar religious rites of the Hebrew people. There is none to the theocracy, to the days of solemn convocation, to the great national festivals, or to the names of the Jewish tribes. There is none to the peculiar judicial laws of the Hebrews, and none to the administration of justice but such as we should find in the early patriarchal times.

These omissions are the more remarkable, as has been already observed, because many of these events would have furnished the



most apposite illustrations of the points maintained by the different speakers of any which had ever occurred in history. Nothing could have been more in point, on numerous occasions in conducting the argument, than the destruction of Pharaoh, the deliverance and protection of the people of God, the care evinced for them in the wilderness, and the overthrow of their enemies in the promised land. So obvious do these considerations appear, that they seem to settle the question on one point in regard to the authorship of the book, and to show that it could not have been composed by a Hebrew *after* the Exode. For several additional arguments to prove that the book was written before the Exode, see Eichhorn, *Einleit.* § 641. As, however, notwithstanding these facts, it has been held by some respectable critics—as Rosenmüller, Umbreit, Warburton, and others—that it was composed as late as the time of Solomon, or even the captivity, it is important to inquire in what way it is proposed to set this argument aside, and by what considerations they propose to defend its composition at a later date than the Exode. They are, briefly, the following.—

(1.) One is, that the very design of the poem, whensoever it was composed, required that there should be no such allusion. The scene, it is said, is laid, not in Palestine, but in a foreign country; the time supposed is that of the patriarchs, and before the Exode; the characters are not Hebrew, but are Arabian or Idumean, and the very purpose of the author required that there should be no allusion to the peculiar history or customs of the Hebrews. The same thing, it is said, occurred which would in the composition of a poem or romance now, in which the scene is laid in a foreign land, or in the time of the Crusades or the Cæsars. We should expect that the characters, the costume, the habits of that foreign country or those distant times, would be carefully observed. “As they [the characters and the author of the work] were Arabians who had nothing to do with the institutions of Moses, it is plain that a writer of genius would not have been guilty of the absurdity of putting the sentiments of a Jew into the mouth of an Arabian, at least so far as relates to such tangible matters as institutions, positive laws, ceremonies, and history. The author has manifested abundant evidence of genius and skill in the structure and execution of the work, to account for his not having given to Arabians the obvious peculiarities of Hebrews who lived under the institutions of Moses, at whatever period it may have been written. Even if the characters of the book had been Hebrews, the argument under consideration would not have been perfectly conclusive; for, from the nature of the subject, we might have expected as little in it that was Levitical or grossly Jewish, as in the Book of Proverbs or Ecclesiastes.” *Noyes, Intro., p. xxviii.* This supposition

*assumes* that the work was written in a later age than that of Moses. It furnishes no *evidence*, however, that it was so written. It can only furnish evidence that the author had genius and skill so to throw himself back into a distant age and into a foreign land, as completely to conceal his own peculiarity of country or time, and to represent characters as living and acting in the supposed country and period, without betraying his own. So far as the question about the author, and the time when the work was composed, is concerned, the fact here admitted, that there *are* no allusions to events after the Exode, is quite as strong certainly in favour of the supposition that it was composed before as after that event. There are still some difficulties on the supposition that it was written by a Hebrew of a later age, who designedly meant to give it an Arabic dress, and to make no allusion to anything in the institutions and history of his own country that would betray its authorship. One is, *the intrinsic difficulty* of doing this. It requires rare genius for an author so to throw himself into past ages, as to leave nothing that shall betray his own times and country. We are never so betrayed as to imagine that Shakspeare lived in the time of Coriolanus or of Caesar; that Johnson lived in the time and the country of Rasselas; or that Scott lived in the times of the Crusaders. Instances have been found, it is admitted, where the concealment has been effectual, but they have been exceedingly rare. Another objection to this view is, that such a work would have been peculiarly impracticable for a Hebrew, who of all men would have been most likely to betray his time and country. The cast of the poem is highly philosophical. The argument is in many places exceedingly abstruse. The appeal is to close and long observation; to the recorded experience of their ancestors; to the observed effects of divine judgments on the world. A Hebrew in such circumstances would have appealed to the authority of God; he would have referred to the terrible sanctions of the law rather than to cold and abstract reasoning; and he could hardly have refrained from some allusion to the events of his own history that bore so palpably on the case. It may be doubted, also, whether any Hebrew ever had such versatility of genius and character as to divest himself wholly of the proper costume of his country, and to appear throughout as an Arabic Emir, and so as never in a long argument to express anything but such as became the assumed character of the foreigner. It should be remembered, also, that the *language* which is used in this poem is different from that which prevailed in the time of Solomon and the captivity. It has an antique cast. It abounds in words which do not elsewhere occur, and whose roots are now to be found only in the Arabic. It has much of the peculiarities of a strongly marked *dialect*—and would require all the

art necessary to keep up the spirit of an ancient dialect. Yet in the whole range of literature there are not probably half-a-dozen instances where such an expedient as this has been resorted to—where a writer has made use of a foreign or an antique dialect for the purpose of giving to the production of his pen an air of antiquity. Aristophanes and the tragedians, indeed, sometimes introduce persons speaking the dialects of parts of Greece different from that in which they had been brought up (*Lee*), and the same is occasionally true of Shakspeare; but except in the case of Chatterton, scarcely one has occurred where the device has been continued through a production of any considerable length. There is a moral certainty that a Hebrew would not attempt it.

(2.) A second objection to the supposition that the work was composed before the Exode, or argument that it was composed by a Hebrew who lived at a much later period of the world, is derived from the supposed allusions to the historical events connected with the Jewish people, and to the peculiar institutions of Moses. It is not maintained that there is any direct mention of those events or those institutions, but that the author has undesignedly “betrayed” himself by the use of certain words and phrases such as no one would employ but a Hebrew. This argument may be seen at length in Warburton’s *Divine Legation of Moses*, vol. v. pp. 306—319, and a full examination of it may be seen in Peter’s *Critical Dissertation on the Book of Job*, pp. 22—36. All that can be done here is to make a very brief reference to the argument. Even the advocates for the opinion that the book was composed after the Exode, have generally admitted that the passages referred to contribute little to the support of the opinion. The passages referred to by Warburton are the following: (1.) *The allusion to the calamities which the wickedness of parents brings upon their children.* “He that speaketh flattery to his friends, even the eyes of his children shall fail.” Ch. xvii. 5. “God layeth up his iniquity for his children; he rewardeth him, and they shall know it.” Ch. xxi. 19. Here it is supposed there is a reference to the principle laid down in the Hebrew Scriptures as a part of the divine administration, that the iniquities of the fathers should be visited upon their children. But it is not necessary to suppose that there was any particular acquaintance with the laws of Moses; to understand this observation of the actual course of events would have suggested all that is alleged in the book of Job on this point. The poverty, disease, and disgrace which the vicious entail on their offspring in every land, would have furnished to a careful observer all the facts necessary to suggest this remark. The opinion that children suffer as a consequence of the sins of wicked parents was common

all over the world. Thus in a verse of Theocritus, delivered as a sort of oracle from Jupiter, *Idyll.* 26:

Εὐσεβίων παιδεύει τὰ λῶϊα, δυσσεβίων δ' οὐ.

“ Good things happen to children of the pious, but not to those of the irreligious.” (2.) *Allusion to the fact that idolatry is an offence against the state, and is to be punished by the civil magistrate.* “ This also [idolatry] were an iniquity to be punished by the judge; for I should have denied the God that is above.” Ch. xxxi. 28. This is supposed to be such a sentiment as a Hebrew only would have employed, as derived from his peculiar institutions, where idolatry was an offence against the state, and was made a capital crime. But there is not the least evidence that in the patriarchal times, and in the country where Job lived, idolatrous worship might not be regarded as a civil offence; and whether it were so or not, there is no reason for surprise that a man who had a profound veneration for God, and for the honor due to his name, such as Job had, should express the sentiment, that the worship of the sun and moon was a heinous offence, and that pure religion was of so much importance, that a violation of its principles ought to be regarded as a crime against society. (3.) *Allusions to certain PHRASES, such as only a Hebrew would use, and which would be employed only at a later period of the world than the Exode.* Such phrases are referred to as the following: “ He shall not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter.” Ch. xx. 17. “ Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.” Ch. xxii. 22. “ O that I were as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle.” Ch. xxix. 4. It is maintained that these are manifest allusions to facts referred to in the books of Moses: that the first refers to the common description of the Holy Land; the second, to the giving of the law on Sinai; and the third, to the dwelling of the *Shekinah*, or visible symbol of God, on the tabernacle. To this we may reply, that the first is such common language as was used in the East to denote plenty or abundance, and is manifestly a proverbial expression. It is used by Pindar, *Nem. i.* 7; and is common in the Arabic writers. The second is only such general language as any one would use who should exhort another to be attentive to the law of God, and has in it manifestly no particular allusion to the method in which the law was given on Sinai. And the third can be shown to have no special reference to the *Shekinah* or cloud of glory as resting on the tabernacle, nor is it such language as a Hebrew would employ in speaking of it. That cloud is nowhere in the Scripture called “ the secret of God,” and the fair mean-

ing of the phrase is, that God came into his dwelling as a friend and counsellor, and admitted him familiarly to communion with him. See Notes on ch. xxix. 4. It was one of the privileges, Job says, of his earlier life that he could regard himself as the friend of God, and that he had clear views of his plans and purposes. Now, those views were withheld, and he was left to darkness and solitude. (5.) *Supposed allusions to the miraculous history of the Jewish people.* "Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars." Ch. ix. 7. Here it is supposed there is allusion to the miracle performed by Joshua in commanding the sun and moon to stand still. But assuredly there is no necessity for supposing that there is a reference to anything miraculous. The idea is, that God has power to cause the sun, the moon, and the stars to shine or not, as he pleases. He can obscure them by clouds, or he can blot them out altogether. Besides, in the account of the miracle performed at the command of Joshua, there is no allusion to *the stars*. "He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud." Ch. xxvi. 12. Here it is supposed there is an allusion to the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea. But the language does not necessarily demand this interpretation, nor will it admit of it. The word improperly rendered "divideth," means *to awe*, to cause to cower, or tremble, and then to be calm or still, and is descriptive of the power which God has over a tempest. See Notes on the verse. There is not the slightest evidence that there is any allusion to the passage through the Red Sea. "He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness where there is no way." Ch. xii. 24. "Who can doubt," says Warburton, "but that these words alluded to the wandering of the Israelites forty years in the wilderness, as a punishment for their cowardice and diffidence in God's promises?" But there is no necessary reference to this. Job is speaking of the control which God has over the nations. He has power to frustrate all their counsels, and to defeat all their plans. He can confound all the purposes of their princes, and throw their affairs into inextricable confusion. In the original, moreover, the word does not necessarily imply a "wilderness" or desert. The word is תָהוּ, a word used in Gen. i. 2, to denote *emptiness*, or *chaos*, and may here refer to the *confusion* of their counsels and plans; or if it refer to a desert, the allusion is of a general character, meaning that God had power to drive the people from their fixed habitations, and to make them wanderers on the face of the earth. "I will show thee; hear me; and what I have seen will I declare; which wise men have told from their fathers, and have not hid it." Ch. xv. 17, 18. "The very way," says Warburton,

“in which Moses directs the Israelites to preserve the memory of the miraculous works of God.” And the very way, also, it may be replied, in which all ancient history, and a<sup>1</sup> the ancient wisdom from the beginning of the world, was transmitted to posterity. There was no other method of preserving the record of past transactions, but by transmitting the memory of them from father to son; and this was and is, in fact, the method of doing it all over the East. It was by no means confined to the Israelites. “Unto whom alone the earth was given, AND NO STRANGER PASSED AMONGST THEM.” Ch. xv. 19. “A circumstance,” says Warburton, “agreeing to no people whatever but to the Israelites settled in Canaan.” But there is no necessary allusion here to the Israelites. Eliphaz is speaking of the *golden age* of his country; of the happy and pure times when his ancestors dwelt in the land without being corrupted by the intermingling of foreigners. He says that he will state the result of *their* wisdom and observation in those pure and happy days, before it could be pretended that their views were corrupted by any foreign admixture. See the Notes on the passage. These passages are the strongest instances of what has been adduced to show that in the book of Job there are allusions to the customs and opinions of the Jews after the Exode from Egypt. It would be tedious and unprofitable to go into a particular examination of all those which are referred to by Bishop Warburton. The remark may be made of them all, that they are of so *general* a character, and that they apply so much to the prevailing manners and customs of the East, that there is no reason for supposing that there is a special reference to the Hebrews. The remaining passages referred to are ch. xxii. 6; xxiv. 7, 9, 10; xxxiii. 17, *seq.*; xxxiv. 20; xxxvi. 7—12, and xxxvii. 13. A full examination of these may be seen in Peter’s Critical Dissertation, pp. 32—36.

(3.) A third objection to the supposition that the book was composed before the time of the Exode, is derived from the use of the word **JEHOVAH**. This word occurs several times in the historical part of the book (ch. i. 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 21; ii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6; xlii. 1, 10, 12), and a few times in the body of the poem. The objection is founded on what God says to Moses, Ex. vi. 3: “And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty; but by my name **JEHOVAH** was I not known to them.” At the burning bush, when he appeared to Moses, he solemnly assumed this name, and directed him to announce him as “*I am that I am*,” or as **JEHOVAH**. From this it is inferred that, as the name occurs in the book of Job, that book must have been composed subsequently to the time when God appeared to Moses. But this conclusion does not follow, for the following reasons: (1.) It *might* be true that God was not known to “Abraham, Isaac, and

Jacob" by this name, and still the name might have been used by others to designate him. (2.) The name JEHOVAH was actually used before this by God himself and by others. Gen. ii. 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21; iii. 9, *et al.*; xii. 1, 4, 7, 8, 17; xiii. 10, 13, 14; xv. 6, 18; xvi. 9, 10, 13, *et sæpe al.* If the argument from this, therefore, be valid to prove that the book of Job was not composed before the Exode, it will demonstrate that the book of Genesis was also a subsequent production. (3.) But the whole argument is based on a misapprehension of Ex. vi. 3. The meaning of that passage, since the name JEHOVAH was known to the patriarchs, must be (*a*) that it was not by this name that he had promulgated his existence, or was publicly and solemnly known. It was a name used in common with other names by them, but which he had in no special way appropriated to himself, or to which he had affixed no special sacredness. The name which he had himself more commonly employed was another. Thus, when he appeared to Abraham and made himself known, he said, "I am the ALMIGHTY GOD; walk before me, and be thou perfect." Gen. xvii. 1. So he appeared to Jacob: "I am GOD ALMIGHTY; be fruitful and multiply." Gen. xxxv. 11. Comp. Gen. xxviii. 3, xliii. 14. (*b*) At the bush (Ex. iii., vi. 3), God publicly and solemnly assumed the name JEHOVAH. He affixed to it a peculiar sacredness. He explained its meaning, Ex. iii. 14. He said it was *the* name by which he intended peculiarly to be known as the God of his people. He invested it with a solemn sacredness, as that by which he chose ever afterwards to be known among his people as *their* God. Other nations had their divinities with different names; the God of the children of Israel was to be known by the peculiar and sacred name JEHOVAH. But this solemn assumption of the name is by no means inconsistent with the supposition that he might have used it before, or that it might have been used before in the composition of the book of Job.

(4.) A fourth objection to the supposition that the book was composed before the time of the Exode is, that the name *Satan*, which occurs in this book, was not known to the Hebrews at so early a date, and that, in fact, it occurs as a proper name only at a late period of their history. See Warburton's *Divine Legation*, vol. v. 353, *seq.* In reply to this it may be observed, (1.) That the doctrine of the existence of an *evil spirit* of the character ascribed in this book to Satan was early known to the Hebrews. It was known in the time of Ahab, when, it is said, the Lord had put a lying spirit in the mouth of the prophets, (1 Kings xxii. 22, 23,) and the belief of such an evil spirit must have been early prevalent to explain in any tolerable way the history of the fall. On the meaning of the word, see Notes on ch. i. 6. (2.) The word *Satan*

early occurs in history in the sense of an adversary or accuser, and it was natural to transfer this word to the great adversary. See Num. xxxii. 22. In Zech. iii. 1, 2, it is used in the same sense as in Job, to denote the great adversary of God appearing before him. See Notes on ch. i. 6. Here Satan is introduced as a being whose name and character were well known. (3.) It is admitted by Warburton himself (p. 355), that the notion of "an evil Demon," or a "Fury," was a common opinion among the heathen, even in early ages, though he says it was not admitted among the Hebrews until a late period of their history. But if it prevailed among the heathen, it is possible that the same sentiment might have been understood in Arabia, and that this might at a very early period have been incorporated into the book of Job. See this whole subject examined in Peters' Critical Dissertation, pp. 80—92. I confess, however, that the answers which Peters and Magee (pp. 322, 323) give to this objection, are not perfectly satisfactory; and that the objection here urged against the composition of the book *before* the Exode, is the most forcible of all those which I have seen. A more thorough investigation of the *history* of the opinions respecting a presiding evil being than I have had access to, seems to be necessary to a full removal of the difficulty. The real difficulty is, not that no such being is elsewhere referred to in the Scriptures; not that his existence is improbable or absurd—for the existence of Satan is no more improbable in itself than that of Nero, Tiberius, Richard III., Alexander VI., or Cæsar Borgia, than either of whom he is not much worse; and not that there are no traces of him in the early account in the Bible;—but it is, that while in the Scriptures we have, up to the time of the Exode, and indeed long after, only obscure *intimations* of his existence and character—without any particular designation of his attributes, and without any *name* being given to him, in the book of Job he appears *with* a name apparently in common use; with a definitely formed character; in the full maturity of his plans—a being evidently as well-defined as the Satan in the latest periods of the Jewish history. I confess myself unable to account for this, but still do not perceive that there is any impossibility in supposing that this maturity of view in regard to the evil principle might have prevailed in the country of Job at this early period, though no occasion occurred for its statement in the corresponding part of the Jewish history. There *may* have been such a prevalent belief among the patriarchs, though in the brief records of their opinions and lives no occasion occurred for a record of their belief.

(5.) A fifth objection has been derived from the fact that in the book of Job there is a strong resemblance to many passages in the Psalms and in the book of Proverbs, from which it is inferred that



it was composed subsequently to those books. Rosenmüller, who has particularly urged this objection, appeals to the following instances of resemblance:—Ps. cvii. 40, comp. with Job xii. 21, 24; Ps. cvii. 42, Job v. 16; Ps. xxii. 19, cxlvii. 8, Job. v. 10; Ps. xxxvii. 6, cxlvii. 9, Job xxxviii. 41; Prov. viii. 11, Job xxviii. 12; Prov. i. 7, Job xxviii. 8; Prov. xv. 11, Job xxvi. 6; Prov. xxvi. 6, Job xv. 16, xxxiv. 7; Prov. viii. 28, 29, Job xxviii. 25; Prov. xviii. 28, Job xiii. 5; Prov. ii. 18, xxi. 16, Job xxvi. 5; Prov. xxviii. 8, Job xxvii. 16, 17; Prov. xvi. 18, xviii. 12, xxix. 23, Job xxii. 29; Prov. viii. 26—29, xxx. 4, Job xxxviii. 4—8; Prov. x. 7, Job xx. 7. It is unnecessary to go into an examination of these passages, or to attempt to disprove their similarity. There can be no doubt of their very strong resemblance, but still the question is fairly open, *which* of these books was first composed, and which, if one has borrowed from another, was the original fountain. Warburton has himself well remarked, that “if the sacred writers must needs have borrowed trite moral sentences from one another, it may be as fairly said that the authors of the Psalms borrowed from the book of Job, as that the author of Job borrowed from the book of Psalms.” Works, vol. v. 320. The supposition that the book of Job was first composed will meet the whole difficulty, so far as one was derived from the other. It should be added, also, that many of these sentiments consist of the common maxims that must have prevailed among a people accustomed to close observation, and habituated to expressing their views in a proverbial form.

I have now noticed at length all the objections which have been urged, which seem to me to have any force, against the supposition that the book of Job was composed before the Exode from Egypt, and have stated the arguments which lead to the supposition that it had so early an origin. The considerations suggested are such as seem to me to leave no rational doubt that the work was composed before the departure from Egypt. The train of thought pursued, therefore, if conclusive, will remove the necessity of all further inquiry into the opinion of Luther, Grotius, and Doederlin, that Solomon was the author; of Umbreit and Noyes, that it was composed by some unknown writer about the period of the captivity; of Warburton, that it was the production of Ezra; and of Rosenmüller, Spanheim, Reimer, Staeudlin, and Richter, that it was composed by some Hebrew writer about the time of Solomon. It remains then to inquire whether there are any circumstances which can lead us to determine with any degree of probability who was the author. This inquiry leads us,

(4.) In the fourth place, to remark that there are no sufficient indications that the work was composed by Elihu. The opinion that he was the author was held, among others, by Lightfoot. But,

independently of the want of any positive evidence which would lead to such a conclusion, there are objections to this opinion which render it in the highest degree improbable. They are found in the argument of Elihu himself. He advances, indeed, with great modesty, but still with extraordinary pretensions to wisdom. He lays claim to direct inspiration, and professes to be able to throw such light on the whole of the perplexed subject as to end the debate. But in the course of his addresses, he introduces but one single idea on the point under discussion which had not been dwelt on at length by the speakers before. That idea is, that afflictions are designed, not to demonstrate that the sufferer was eminently guilty, as the friends of Job held, *but that they might be intended for the benefit of the sufferer himself*, and might, therefore, be consistent with true piety. This idea he places in a variety of attitudes; illustrates it with great beauty, and enforces it with great power on the attention of Job. Comp. Notes on ch. xxxiii. 14—30; xxxiv. 31, 32; xxxv. 10—15; xxxvi. 7—16. But in his speeches Elihu shows no such extraordinary ability as to lead us to suppose that he was the author of the work. He does not appear to have understood the design of the trials that came upon Job; he gives no satisfactory solution of the causes of affliction; he abounds in repetition; his observation of the course of events had been evidently much less profound than that of Eliphaz, and his knowledge of nature was much less extensive than that of Job and the other speakers; and he was evidently as much in the dark in the great question which is discussed throughout the book as the other speakers were. Besides, as Prof. Lee has remarked (p. 44), the belief that Elihu wrote the book is inconsistent with the supposition that the first two chapters and the last chapter were written by the same author who composed the body of the work. He who wrote these chapters manifestly “saw through the whole affair,” and understood the reasons why these trials came upon the patriarch. Those reasons would have been suggested by Elihu in his speech, if he had known them.

5. The supposition that Job himself was the author of the book, though it may have been slightly modified by some one subsequently, will meet all the circumstances of the case. This will agree with its foreign cast and character; with the use of the Arabic words now unknown in Hebrew; with the allusions to the nomadic habits of the times, and to the modes of living, and to the illustrations drawn from sandy plains and deserts; with the statements about the simple modes of worship prevailing, and the notice of the sciences and the arts, (see Intro. § 8,) and with the absence of all allusion to the Exode, the giving of the law, and the peculiar customs and institutions of the Hebrews. In addition to these

*general* considerations for supposing that Job was the author of the work, the following suggestions may serve to show that this opinion is attended with the highest degree of probability. (1.) Job lived after his calamities an hundred and forty years, affording ample leisure to make the record of his trials. (2.) The art of making books was known in his time, and by the patriarch himself, ch. xix. 23, 24; xxxi. 35. In whatever way it was done, whether by engraving on stone or lead, or by the use of more perishable materials, he was not ignorant of the art of making a record of thoughts to be preserved and transmitted to future times. Understanding this art, and having abundant leisure, it is scarcely to be conceived, that he would have failed to make a record of what had occurred during his own remarkable trials. (3.) The whole account was one that would furnish important lessons to mankind, and it is hardly probable that a man who had passed through so unusual a scene would be willing that the recollection of it should be intrusted to uncertain tradition. The strongest arguments which human ingenuity could invent, had been urged on both sides of a great question pertaining to the divine administration; a case of a strongly marked character had happened, similar to what is constantly occurring in the world, in which similar perplexing and embarrassing questions would arise: God had come forth to inculcate the duty of man in this case, and had furnished instruction that would be invaluable in all similar instances; and the result of the whole trial had been such as to furnish the strongest proof, that however the righteous are afflicted, their sufferings are not proof that they are deceivers or hypocrites. (4.) The record of his own imperfections and failures is just such as we should expect from Job, on the supposition that he was the author of the book, Nothing is concealed. There is the most fair and full statement of his impatience, his murmuring, his irreverence, and of the rebuke which he received of the Almighty. Thus Moses, too, records his own failings, and, throughout the Scriptures, the sacred writers never attempt to conceal their own infirmities and faults. (5.) Job has shown in his own speeches that he was abundantly able to compose the book. In everything he goes immeasurably beyond all the other speakers, except God; and he who was competent, in trials so severe as his were, to give utterance to the lofty eloquence, the argument, and the poetry now found in his speeches, was not incompetent to make a record of them in the long period of health and prosperity which he subsequently enjoyed. Every circumstance, therefore, seems to me to render it probable that Job was the compiler, or perhaps we should rather say, *the Editor* of this remarkable book, with the exception of the record which is made of his own age and death. The speeches were undoubtedly made

substantially as they are recorded, and the work of the author was to collect and *edit* those speeches, to record his own and that of the Almighty, and to furnish to the whole the proper historical notices, that the argument might be properly understood.

6. But one other supposition seems necessary to meet all the questions which have been raised in regard to the origin of the work. It is, that Moses adopted it and published it among the Hebrews as a part of divine revelation, and intrusted it to them, with his own writings, to be transmitted to future times. Several circumstances contribute to render this probable. (1.) Moses spent forty years in various parts of Arabia, mostly in the neighbourhood of Horeb; and in a country where, if such a work had been in existence, it would be likely to be known. (2.) His talents and previous training at the court of Pharaoh were such as would make him likely to look with interest on any literary document; on any work expressive of the customs, arts, sciences, and religion of another land; and especially on anything having the stamp of uncommon genius. (3.) The work was eminently adapted to be useful to his own countrymen, and could be employed to great advantage in the enterprise which he undertook of delivering them from bondage. It contained an extended examination of the great question which could not but come before their minds—why the people of God were subjected to calamities; it inculcated the necessity of submission without murmuring, under the severest trials; and it showed that God was the friend of his people, though they were long afflicted, and would ultimately bestow upon them abundant prosperity. There is every probability, therefore, that if Moses found such a book in existence, he would have adopted it as an important auxiliary in accomplishing the great work to which he was called. It may be added (4), that there is every reason to think that Moses was not himself the author of it. This opinion rests on such considerations as these: (*a*) The style is not that of Moses. It has more allusion to proverbs, and maxims, and prevailing views of science, than occur in his poetic writings. See Lowth, *Præ. Hebr.* xxxii.; Michaelis, *Nat. et Epim.* p. 186, as quoted by Magee, p. 328; and Herder, *Heb. Poetry*, vol. i. pp. 108, 109. (*b*) Moses in his poetry almost invariably used the word JEHOVAH as the name of God, rarely that of *the Almighty* (*אֱלֹהִים*, *Shaddai*); in Job, the word JEHOVAH rarely occurs in the body of the poem, some other name for the Deity being almost uniformly employed. (*c*) In the book of Job there are numerous instances of words, the roots of which are now obsolete, or which are found only in the Arabic or Chaldee. See Prof. Lee, *Intro.* p. 50. (*d*) The allusions to Arabic customs, opinions, and manners, are not such as would have been likely to be familiar to the mind of

Moser. All that he could have learnt of them would have been what he acquired, when over forty years of age, in keeping the flocks of his father-in-law, Jethro; and though it might be said with plausibility, that the forty years which he spent with him might have made him familiar with the habits of Arabia, still, in a poem of this length, we should have expected that these would not have been the only allusions. The most vivid and permanent impressions on the mind are those made in youth; and on the mind of Moses, those impressions had been received in Egypt. If the work had been composed by him we should, have expected that there would have been frequent allusions that would have betrayed its Egyptian origin. But of these there are none, or if there are any which have such an origin, they are such as might have been readily learned from the common reports of travellers. But with all that pertained to the desert, to the keeping of flocks and herds, to the nomadic mode of life, to the poor and needy wanderers there, to the methods of plunder and robbery, the author of the poem shows himself to be perfectly familiar. It seems to me, therefore, that by this train of remarks we are conducted to a conclusion attended with as much certainty as can be hoped for in the nature of the case, that the work was composed by Job himself in the period of rest and prosperity which succeeded his trials, and came to the knowledge of Moses during his residence in Arabia, and was adopted by him *to represent to the Hebrews, in their trials, the duty of submission to the will of God, and to furnish the assurance that he would yet appear to crown with abundant blessings his own people, however much they might be afflicted.*

## V.

### *The Character and the Design of the book.*

It has long been a question, which has excited much interest among those who have written on this book, what is the *nature* of the poem? That the body of the work is poetic admits of no doubt; and an attempt was early made to determine the department of poetry to which it belonged. With some, it has been regarded as a regular drama; with others, as an epic poem; and laborious efforts have been made to show, that in its form, spirit, and arrangement, it comes within the limits usually assigned to these kinds of composition. But it cannot be doubted that undue importance has been attached to this question; nor can it be any more doubted that it cannot fairly be classed with either. It stands by itself—a poem, framed without reference to the Grecian rules of art; composed and published long before the laws of composition were re-

duced to order, and having, in fact, the characteristics of neither the epic nor the drama. There is nothing that bears an exact resemblance to it in Grecian, in Roman, or in modern literature. As a composition, it has little that resembles the *Iliad*, the *Æneid*, the *Jerusalem Delivered*, or the *Paradise Lost*. The design of the author was not to excite interest in the fortunes of the principal person or hero of the poem, nor to exhibit characteristic traits in the other personages introduced, nor to conduct a regular action to a determined and important result—as in an epic poem. As little can it be regarded as a regular drama. In its dialogue, indeed, and in the tragic interest which encompasses the character of Job, it has some resemblance to the drama; but this resemblance is incidental to the purpose of the author, and not a part of his main design. “If the word” [drama], says Eichhorn, *Einleit.* § 640, “be taken in its most simple meaning, as denoting a dialogue, I would not contend with any one about the name. But if the word be taken according to the modern acceptation, the poem is not a drama. The drama, according to the modern conceptions, was entirely unknown to the Orientals, and is so little in accordance with their views and customs, that the Arabians, after they became acquainted with the Grecian dramatic learning, would not introduce it among themselves. Casiri, *Biblioth. Arab. Escur.* T.1, p. 85. All *action* is wanting in this poem; for the prologue and epilogue, where there is some action, do not pertain properly to the poem.” On the question, whether it has the properties of an epic poem, the reader may consult also Eichhorn, *Einleit.* § 640, vol. v. pp. 139, fgg. Indeed, this whole controversy, to what particular department of poetry this work belongs, which has been waged for centuries almost, has all the characteristics of a logomachy, and, if determined, would do little in explanation of the book. Those who are disposed to prosecute the inquiry may find a full discussion in Lowth’s *Lectures on Hebrew Poetry*, *Lect.* xxxii.—xxxiv.; Warburton’s *Divine Legation*, B. VI. § 2; Herder’s *Heb. Poetry*, *Dial.* IV. 5; and Dr. Good’s *Introduction*.

Instead of entering into the controversy respecting the nature of the poem, it will be more useful to state what seems to be the design of the book, and the *form* which the poem actually presents. Having this object before the mind distinctly, it will be easy for any one to give it such a classification in the various departments of poetry, as shall seem to him to be most accordant with truth. In order to understand this poem, it is important to have before the mind a clear conception of the peculiarities of the poetry of the Hebrews. I shall therefore enter here into a somewhat detailed explanation of a subject that is important to every student of the Scriptures.

Much has been written on the subject of Hebrew poetry, and yet there is no department of Scriptural investigation which has been pursued with less encouraging success. Almost nothing has been done to throw light on it since the time of Lowth, and it must be admitted that he has left many questions almost entirely unsettled. It is still asked, what constitutes the peculiarity of Hebrew poetry? Is it to be found in rhythm? Are the various kinds of poetry which occur in the writings of other nations, to be found in the compositions of the Hebrews? How does their poetry differ from the more elevated parts of their prose writings? And as the one seems sometimes to slide insensibly into the other, how shall it be known where the one ends and the other begins?

In regard to these questions, it may be observed,

(1.) That the poetry of the Hebrews is not constituted by *rhyme*. The same remark, it is obvious, might be made respecting the poetry of all other people. Rhyme, or the occurrence of similar sounds at the close of the lines, is an artifice of modern origin, and of doubtful advantage. The reader need not be informed that it does not occur in Homer or Hesiod; in Virgil or Ovid; in the *Paradise Lost*, or in the *Task*. The highest kind of poetry exists without rhyme, and it has been made a question whether its use might not have been dispensed with altogether.

It is certain that rhyme does not constitute the peculiarity of Hebrew poetry; for in the few cases where it occurs in the Hebrew Scriptures, it seems to have been the result of accident rather than design. Something like rhyme can, indeed, be discovered in cases like the following:

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ חֹכְמָנוּ  
וְאֵל בְּחִמָּתָהּ תִּיכָרְנִי

Yehovâh, âl beäppekâ thokihhëni;  
Věâl bahhamâtheke theyässerëni. Ps. vi. 2.

מִדְּאָנוֹשׁ כִּי תִזְכְּרֶנּוּ  
יִבְרָאֵם בִּי תִשְׁמְעֶנּוּ

Mâ ânosh ki thîzkerënnu,  
Ubën âdâm ki thîphqedhënnu. Ps. viii. 5.

אֶל תִּתְּרוּ בְּפִרְעִים  
אֶל תִּקְנֶה בְּרָשָׁעִים

Al tithkhâr bâmmërëim,  
Al tēkännë bâreshâim. Prov. xxiv. 10.

שָׁלַח מַלְאָךְ וַיְחִידֵהוּ  
מִשְׁחַל עֲמִים וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲדֵהוּ

Shâlâhh mëlêk vaiyattirëhu,  
Môshel ämmim vaiyephattehhehu. Ps. cv. 20.

In Isa. x. 6, the two subdivisions of the first clause of the verse rhyme together:

בְּנֵי דָקָה אֲשַׁלְּחֵנּוּ  
וְעַל עַם עֲבָרְתִי אֲצַוֵּנּוּ

Begöy hhânēph ashällērhēnnu,  
Veäl am ibráthi ätzävvēnnu.

So in Isa. liii. 6:

קָלְנִי כַצֶּמַח קִימִינִי  
אִשׁ חֲרָכֹו קִימִינִי

Küllānu kättzēn tāinu  
Ish lēdhārko pāninu.

So the two last clauses in Isa. i. 9, xlv. 3; and Ps. xlv. 8. The two principal clauses of the verse rhyme in Prov. vi. 1, 2; Job vi. 9; Isa. i. 29. In one instance three rhymes are to be found in a sentence, as in Isa. i. 25:

וְאִשְׁרֵיהֶּ דְּיָצִיק  
וְאִצְרֹפֹה כְּבוֹר סִגְגִּיק  
וְאִסְרֵיהֶּ קִלְבִּדִילִיק

Vēāshibāh yādhi ālāik,  
Vēētzroph kābbor siggāik,  
Vēāsīrah kōl bēdhilāik.

Other instances of a similar kind may be found in the Dissertation of Theodore Ebert on the rules of Hebrew measure and rhythm, in Ugolin's *Thes. Sac., Ant.*, tom. xxxi. pp. 20, 21. The cases, however, which occur in the poetry of the Hebrews where rhyme at the end of verses is apparent, are too few to lead us to suppose that it was designed by the writers, and they are probably only such as would occur had an effort to write in the form of rhyme never been known.

(2.) The poetry of the Hebrews is not constituted by *rhythm*. Rhythm has reference to the admeasurement of the lines of poetry by feet and numbers, and relates to the length and shortness of the syllables, and to the regular succession of one after another. It is the rule in composition which aims to reduce its various and resisting elements to unity and harmony. De Wette, *Einlei.* pp. 51, 52. The rules in regard to this pertain to quantity, inflection, accentuation, and the arrangement of the members and parts of a period. *Metre* of some kind has been regarded as almost necessary to poetry, and the care of the ancient Greek and Latin poets in regard to it is well known. It has been made a question of much interest whether such laws prevail in the Hebrew poetry; and whether, if it ever existed, it is possible to trace it now. Carpzov, Ebert, and Lowth, maintained that such metre or rhythm



must have existed, though it is now lost to us. Lowth (*Lectures on Hebrew Poetry*, III.) maintains that "the Hebrew writings are not only animated with the true poetic spirit, but are in some degree confined to numbers;" that properties altogether peculiar to metrical composition are found; that the Hebrew poets use, like the Greeks, "glosses," or expressions taken from foreign languages, and adopt a peculiar form in the termination of words, so as to form a poetical dialect; but that as to the "quantity, rhythm, or modulation," it is hopeless now to attempt to recover it, "the true pronunciation being now lost." Similar views are expressed by Pfeiffer (*Ueber d. Musik d. alten Heb.* p. xvi.); Bauer (*Einleit. ins A. T.* p. 358, sq.); Jahn (*Bibl. Arch. Th. I. B. I.*); and Meyer, *Hermen. des A. T.* ii. 329; Comp. De Wette, *Einleit.* p. 45. Josephus affirmed that in Hebrew poetry are to be found both hexameter and tetrameter verses. *Ant. B.* II. ch. xvi. § 4; *B.* VII. ch. xii. § 3. "Philo, in several passages of his writings, maintains that Moses was acquainted with metre." Nordheimer, *Heb Gram.* vol. ii. p. 319. Gomarus, Hare, Greve, and several others of equal celebrity, have sought to ascertain the laws of metre in Hebrew poetry, but without success. If it ever existed, it is now hopeless to attempt to recover it. There is little evidence that we have the correct pronunciation of the language; the laws of metre are now unknown, and there is no way of ascertaining them. Indeed, the evidence is not satisfactory that any such laws ever existed. The assertions of Josephus and Philo can be easily accounted for. They were Jews, proud of their own language; and supposing, justly, that the poetry of their sacred bards was equal to any which could be produced in the writings of the Romans or the Greeks, they were anxious to show that it had all the properties of poetry existing among them. Yet in their time, it was a settled rule among the Greeks and Romans that poetry was known by its rhythm, by its accurate and careful admeasurement of numbers, and its harmonious and graceful flow of measure. Nothing was more natural, therefore, than that they should affirm that the same thing existed in the Hebrew poetry, and that portions of it could be adduced which for beauty and grace of measure would equal the boasted productions of Greece and Rome. That specimens *might* have been produced capable of being measured by feet, no one can disprove; and yet this may not have been at all a leading object in the poetry of the Hebrews. It should be remembered, that the Hebrew poetry is the oldest now extant; that it was composed long before the artificial rules known in Greece and Rome were in existence; that it was designed to express the sentiments of the earliest period of the world, when all was fresh and new; and that we are to look for less attention

to the rules of composition than in a more cultivated and artificial age. Indications of *art* there are indeed in the alphabetical poems, and in the carefully constructed parallelisms, but it is not the art of rhythm or metre.

(3.) It is not a characteristic of Hebrew poetry that it is formed according to the regular laws of composition which fetter the poets of more modern times. There are, indeed, lyric and elegiac poems of exquisite beauty and tenderness. But there is no regular epic poem; for although their early history furnished finer materials for such a poem than the occurrences celebrated in either the *Iliad* or the *Æneid*, it seems never to have occurred to them to attempt to mould those materials into the form of an heroic poem. The Hebrews had no dramatic poetry. The stage was unknown among them, and indeed was unknown among the Greeks until long after the time when the most celebrated of the Hebrew poets lived. We are not to look, therefore, for the characteristics of Hebrew poetry in the stately modes of composition which occur in other languages.

If it be asked, then, what are the characteristics of Hebrew poetry? how does it differ from prose? how can its existence be determined? we may reply, (1.) It consists in the nature of the subjects which are treated; in the ornate and elevated character of the style; in the sententious manner of expression; and in certain peculiarities in the structure of sentences and the choice of words which are found only in poetry, which will be noticed hereafter. (2.) It is the language of nature in the early periods of the world, expressing itself in the form of surprise, astonishment, exultation, triumph,—the outpouring of a mind raised by excitement above its ordinary tone of feeling. The prose writer expresses himself in a calm and tranquil manner when free from the influence of strong excitement. His sedate emotions are reflected in the language which he uses. The poet is animated. His mind is excited. Every faculty of the soul is brought into exercise. His heart is full; his imagination glows; his associations are rapid; and the soul pours forth its emotions in language figurative, concise, abrupt. The boldest metaphors are sought; the terms expressing deepest intensity of feeling suggest themselves to the mind; or language most beautiful, tender, and soothing, expresses the emotions of sorrow or of love. It is in the Hebrew poetry, more strikingly than anywhere else, that we perceive the evidence of the intensity with which objects struck the imagination in the early periods of the world; and nowhere do we find such examples of sublimity and power as there. (3.) The language of poetry is distinguished from prose by the *effort* which is made to express the ideas, and by the *form* which that effort gives. Sometimes we have merely a *glimpse* of the thought or the object, which it is left for the imagi-

nation to fill up. Sometimes the thought is repeated, thrown into a new form, modified, or merely *echoed* from the first attempt to express it. The mind, full of the conception, labors to give utterance to it, and in the effort there may be repetition, or a slight variation in the words, or an attempt to show its force by striking contrast. It is from this effort of the mind that there was originated the principal peculiarity of Hebrew poetry, exhibited in the form of *parallelism*.

This general characteristic of poetry in all languages manifests itself in some peculiar form in accordance with the character of a people, or with prevailing taste, or in imitation of some distinguished writer. Some *artificial* rules are adopted, in accordance with which the poetic spirit is manifested. In one country or age this may be by rhyme; in another, by the rhythm of measured feet or numbers; at one time, it may be by simple "blank verse;" at another, by the smoothness and harmony of similar endings. The elegy, the eclogue, the pastoral, the lyric, the tragic, the epic, may all be employed, and in all the poetic spirit may reign. The Greeks and Romans employed rhythm, and reduced the laws of poetic feet and numbers to the severest rules; rhyme has been since invented for similar purposes, and occupies a large place in modern poetry; while another form still may be found in the Hebrew, the Arabic, and the Persian poetry. In some countries and times the artificial rules may be few and little complicated; in others, they may be numerous, and wrought up with the highest skill of art. One mode may be adapted to the taste of one people, and another, to that of another; and still the essential characteristics of poetry be found in all. Nay, one artificial mode of poetry that is now obsolete may be in itself as reasonable and valuable as another that is retained, and no reason can be given except that the *tastes* of men change by time, circumstances, and fashion. The parallelism of the Hebrew may be as poetic in its character, and as rational in itself, as the rhyme; perhaps it may be better adapted to express the conceptions of the highest kind of poetry. The apparently cumbrous versification of Spenser may have as much poetic merit as the numbers of Pope, and the time may come when that stanza shall be restored to the honor which it once possessed as the medium of the poetic sentiment.

We are not, therefore, to judge Hebrew poetry by *our* artificial forms. We are not to say, because it lacks the ornament of rhyme, or because it cannot now be reduced to the laws of poetic numbers which are applied to Homer or Virgil, that therefore it is destitute of the true spirit of poetry. We are to inquire whether it have the elevated conceptions, the sublime thoughts, the grandeur of imagery, the tenderness and sweetness, the beauty of description,

and the power to rouse the soul, which are everywhere recognised as the characteristics of poetry. We are then to inquire, what modes the ancient bards chose as the forms in which they should embody their conceptions; perhaps as an incidental inquiry we are to ask whether *those* forms are not adapted to the age and land in which they occur, as really as the forms now most admired may be to our own. This inquiry has never been pursued as it should have been, and this is not the place in which to prosecute it. The inquiry which is proper here is, only, in what artificial forms the spirit of poetry among the Hebrews was embodied and preserved. What rules had they according to which to record their poetic conceptions?

Hebrew poetry appears, then, under the following artificial forms:—

1. In an *alphabetical arrangement*. We have something like this in the acrostic, where each line begins with a letter of a certain word. The Hebrew poets sometimes adopted a similar method, by commencing each line with one of the letters of the alphabet; or where every alternate verse began with a succeeding letter; or where a series of verses have the same initial letters. This artificial mode of composition appears with several modifications.

(a.) Commonly each verse begins with one of the successive letters of the alphabet, and the number of the verses is therefore the same as the number of Hebrew letters. This occurs in Prov. xxxi. 10—31, where the order of the letters is exactly observed, and Lam. i. This is the case, also, in Psalm xxv., except that two verses begin with א; and none with ב; the ו and פ are wanting, and two verses begin with ר; and at the close after the נ a line beginning with ע occurs. So in Lam. ii. 4, except that פ and ר are exchanged in their places. In like manner, in Psalm xxxiv., which is constructed on this plan, the ו is wanting, and the Psalm concludes with a line beginning with פ. In Psalm cxlv. the order is exactly observed, except that ב is wanting.

(b.) In Psalm xxxvii. there are evidences of a more artificial structure, though it is not wholly regular. The Psalm consists of forty verses, and it would seem that it was the original conception that the letter ב should precede each of the letters of the alphabet in the beginning of the verse. The order of letters is the following: א, ב, ג, ד, ה, ו, ז, ח, ט, י, כ, ל, מ, נ, ס, ע, פ, צ, ק, ר, ש, ת. The Psalm, it will at once be seen, is quite irregular, though the general order of the letters of the alphabet is observed. It is now impossible to explain the cause of the irregularity.

(c.) Another form is found in Ps. cxi. cxii. In these Psalms the half-verses are alphabetically arranged, or every half-verse or member begins with a new letter of the alphabet. These Psalms

are regular in their structure, and the series occurs in the exact order of the letters of the alphabet.

(*d.*) In Lamentations iii. and Ps. cxix. another alphabetical form still more artificial appears. In Lamentations three verses in succession begin with one of the letters of the alphabet, followed by three more beginning with the succeeding letter, and so on through the alphabet; except that, as in chs. ii. and iv., *v* and *y* change places. In Psalm cxix. the same arrangement extends through eight successive verses, dividing the whole Psalm into alphabetical strophes of that number of verses.

What was the *design* of this arrangement is now unknown. Michaelis supposes that it was at first a device employed in the funeral dirge to aid mourners; and De Wette, that it was owing to a vitiated taste. Lowth supposes that it was confined to those compositions which consisted of detached maxims, or sentiments, without any express order or connexion, and that the whole arrangement was to assist the memory. It seems to me that it must be regarded as a mere matter of *taste*—and certainly of taste quite as elevated and rational as the rhyme or the acrostic are with moderns. That it was not adopted to aid the memory is apparent, because it is found in very few of the poetical compositions of the Hebrews; while if this were the object, we should expect to find it extended to all. For a similar reason it could not have been designed, as Michaelis supposes, to aid in funeral dirges; for it is found in no funeral dirges, unless the “Lamentations” be regarded as such. Nor can the supposition of Lowth be correct, for in Ps. xxv., xxxvii., cxi., cxii., cxlv., there is as close a connexion of sentiment as occurs in any of the Psalms; and indeed some of them are quite remarkable for the continuity of thought and singleness of design. There are many artificial modes of poetry in all languages which can be accounted for on no other principle than that they are mere matters of taste; and they who censure this form of Hebrew poetry, should inquire whether the censure should be withheld from many forms of poetry existing in the best writings of modern times.

2. An artificial form of poetry is observable in a few instances where a complex rhythmical period or strophe occurs. The peculiarity of this form is, that the same verse or sentiment is repeated at somewhat distant intervals, or after the recurrence of about the same number of verses. Whether this *intercalary* verse (Germ. *Schaltvers*) was designed to aid the memory, or to be sung by a part of a choir, or was regarded as a mere poetic ornament, cannot now be determined. An instance occurs in Ps. xlii. xliii. After the first four verses, the following occurs: “Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope

thou in God; for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance." After five verses, the same verse occurs with a slight variation; and after four verses more, it occurs again in the same manner, showing that it was intended to close a strophe, or large period. The same thing occurs in Ps. cvii., where the Psalm is divided into unequal portions by the recurrence of the same sentiment, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." This occurs after verses 1—7; verses 9—14; verses 16—20; and verses 22—30. Gesenius supposes that a part of Solomon's Song is composed in the same manner. One instance of this occurs in Isaiah. It is in ch. ix. 8—21; x. 1—4. After each strophe, consisting of four or five verses, the following sentiment is repeated: "For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still;" ch. ix. 12, 17, 21; x. 4. Amos i. 2—15; ii. 1—6, is constructed in the same artificial manner.

3. A third artificial form of poetry occurs in the *rhythm of gradation* (De Wette, *Stufenrhythmus*), and is found mainly in the "Psalms of Degrees." It consists in this, that the thought or expression of the preceding verse is resumed and carried forward in the next. An instance of this occurs in Psalm cxxi.:

1. I lift up mine eyes unto the hills;  
From whence will *my help come?*
2. *My help cometh* from JEHOVAH,  
The Creator of heaven and earth.
3. He suffereth not thy foot to be moved;  
Thy keeper *slumbereth* not.
4. Lo! he *slumbereth* not, nor sleepeth  
The *keeper* of Israel.
5. JEHOVAH is thy *keeper*;  
JEHOVAH thy shade is at thy right hand:
6. The sun shall not smite thee by day,  
Nor the moon by night.
7. JEHOVAH *preserveth* thee from all evil,  
*Preserveth* thy soul.
8. JEHOVAH *preserveth* thy going out and thy coming in,  
From this time forth and for evermore.

These "Songs of Degrees" are fifteen in number, extending from Ps. cxx. to cxxxiv. The same characteristics may be found in them all, and it is probable that they derived their name from this artificial structure, and not because they were sung as the tribes were *going up* to Jerusalem. The song of Deborah (Judges v.) is constructed on this principle, as the following specimens will show:

4. Lord, *when thou wentest out* of Seir,  
When thou *marchedst out* of the field of Edom,  
The earth trembled,  
And the heavens *dropped*,  
The clouds also *dropped water*.

5. The mountains melted *before the Lord*,  
Even that Sinai, from *before the Lord God of Israel*.
7. The inhabitants of the villages *ceased*,  
They *ceased in Israel*.  
Until that I Deborah *arose*,  
That I *arose a mother in Israel*
20. They *fought* from heaven,  
The stars in *their courses fought* against Sisera
21. The river of Kishon *swept* them away,  
That ancient river, the river Kishon.
22. Then were the horse-hoofs broken by means of the *prancings*,  
The *prancings of their mighty ones*, etc. etc.

An instance of this artificial arrangement occurs in Isa. xxvi. 5, 6:

The lofty city *he layeth it low*,  
Hath *laid it low to the ground*,  
He hath *levelled it to the dust*.  
The foot shall trample on it,  
The feet of the poor, the steps of the needy.

4. The grand peculiarity of the Hebrew poetry, however, is the *parallelism*. This form of composition, which seems to us to be artificial in a high degree, consists in the repetition of the main thought usually with some modification. It arose from such circumstances as the following:—(1.) The Hebrew poetry, in the main, was composed at a very early period of the world, and at that point of intellectual cultivation when the mind is in a condition to seize only certain simple and general relations of things, and to express them strongly. (2.) The mind is supposed to be struck with wonder and to be highly excited. The object presented is new and strange, and fills the soul with elevated and glowing conceptions. (3.) In this state, the mind naturally expresses itself in short sentences, and is apt merely to repeat the idea. It is not in a condition to observe minute relations, but seeks to express the thought in the most impressive and forcible manner possible. The speaker struggles with language; the words are slow to adapt themselves to the thought; and the principal idea is expressed and dwelt upon with earnestness. The object is to express the glowing conception of the mind; and that object is effected by repetition, by the addition of a slight circumstance, by comparison, or by contrast with some other subject. Sometimes, in this effort to express the main thought, the secondary expression will be little more than the echo of the first attempt; sometimes it will greatly excel it in force and brilliancy; sometimes some striking and beautiful conception will be appended; sometimes, to heighten the impression, the main idea will be expressed in contrast with some other. In all these cases the form of short sentences will be preserved; though the number and modes of the *efforts* made to give expression to the main thought may be greatly varied. These

circumstances gave rise to the parallelism, which became the favorite form of poetry among the Hebrews, and which abounds so much in every part of the Old Testament.

Various divisions have been made of the parallelism, and to a considerable extent those divisions must be arbitrary. Lowth (Prel. Diss. to Isaiah, and Lectures on Hebrew Poetry, xix.) reduces the parallelism to three kinds—synonymous, antithetic, and synthetic. This division has been adopted by Nordheimer (Gram. vol. ii. pp. 323, seq.), and by writers on Hebrew poetry in general. De Wette (Einleit. 56—63) has suggested *four* kinds of parallelism, as embracing the forms which exist in the Old Testament. They are (I.) when there is an equality of words; (II.) when the words are not equal: divided into (1) the *simple* unequal parallelism, and (2) the *complex* unequal parallelism, embracing (a) the synonymous, (b) the antithetic, and (c) the synthetic; (3) instances where the simple member is disproportionably small, (4) cases where the complex member is increased to three or four propositions; and (5) cases where there is a short clause or supplement, for the most part in the second member. III. Parallelism, when both the members are complex; embracing also (a) the synonymous; (b) the antithetic; and (c) the synthetic. IV. *Rhythmical parallelism*, when it consists, not in the thought, but in the form of the period. Under this last form of parallelism, De Wette supposes that the Lamentations of Jeremiah should be nearly all ranged.

Without adopting precisely either of the arrangements above referred to, the following classification will probably include all the modes in which the parallelism occurs in the Scriptures, being substantially the same as that of Lowth.

(1.) *The synonymous parallelism.* In this, the second clause is a repetition of the first. This occurs under considerable variety in regard to the *length* of the members.

(a) The repetition is nearly in the same words, or where a single word may be changed. Thus in Isa. xv. 1, where the *subject* alone is changed:

Verily, by a nightly assault, Ar of Moab is laid waste and ruined;  
Verily, by a nightly assault, Kir of Moab is laid waste and ruined.

In Prov. vi. 2 the *verb* only is changed:

Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth;  
Thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.

Sometimes an idea is only partially expressed in the first clause; in the second this is repeated, and the sentence brought to a close, as in Ps. xciv. 1:

God of vengeance—JEHOVAH!  
God of vengeance—shine forth.



In Ps. xciii. 3, the entire sentence is again repeated in a varied form :

The floods have lifted up, O JEHOVAH!  
The floods have lifted up their voice;  
The floods lift up their waves.

(b) In this parallelism there is often an *equality in the words*, at least in their number. Thus in the song of Lamech, Gen. iv. 23 :

Adah and Zillah, hear my voice !  
Wives of Lamech, receive my speech !  
If I have slain a man to my wounding,  
And a young man to my hurt;  
If Cain was avenged seven times,  
Then Lamech—seventy times seven.

Thus also in Job vi. 5 :

Doth the wild ass bray over his grass?  
Doth the ox low over his fodder?

Such instances occur often in the Scriptures, and perhaps this may be considered the *original* form of the parallelism.

(c) In the synonymous parallelism, as in other forms also, there is often a great inequality in the number of the words. These instances seem to have occurred where it was desirable to give *emphasis* to the thought by the utmost brevity in one of the members, while, perhaps, in the other member, the thought is dwelt upon or repeated. Thus in Ps. lxviii. 33 :

Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth;  
O sing praises unto JEHOVAH.

So in Ps. xl. 9, where the simple member is disproportionately small, and the inequality, therefore, still more striking :

I proclaim thy righteousness in the great congregation;  
Lo ! I refrain not my lips !  
O Lord, thou knowest !

So in Job x. 1, where the principal emphatic thought is followed by a parallelism, stating what was proper in view of the fact of which he complained :

I am weary of my life :  
Therefore will I give loose to my complaints ;  
I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

(d) The idea is expressed in the form of a *climax*, where the thought rises and becomes more emphatic. This climax sometimes is found in the verbs used. Thus in Ps. xxii. 27 :

All the ends of the world shall *remember*, and *turn* to the Lord;  
And all the kindreds of the nations shall *WORSHIP* before thee.

For the sake of emphasis, the verb of the first clause is sometimes

placed at the commencement, and the corresponding one of the second at the termination. Isa. xxxv. 3 :

Strengthen the weak hands ;  
And the tottering knees make firm.

A climax in thought often occurs, as in this instance, Isa. liv. 4 :

Fear not, for thou shalt not be confounded ;  
And blush not, for thou shalt not be put to shame :  
For thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth,  
And the reproach of thy widowhood shalt thou remember no more.

(c.) We meet with double parallelisms, or cases where each clause of a verse corresponds with each clause of the member preceding, as in Ps. xxxiii. 13, 14 :

From heaven the Lord looks down,  
He sees all the sons of men ;  
From his dwelling-place he looks  
Upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

So in Isa. i. 15 :

When ye spread forth your hands,  
I will hide mine eyes from you ;  
When ye multiply prayers,  
I will not hearken.

Sometimes the second parallelism contains the *cause* of what is stated in the preceding. Isa. lxi. 10:

I will greatly rejoice in JEHOVAH ;  
My soul shall exult in my God :  
For he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation ;  
He hath covered me with the mantle of righteousness.

Or the first contains a comparison, and the second the thing compared. Isa. lxi. 11:

For as the earth putteth forth her tender shoots,  
And as a garden causes its seed to germinate ;  
So the Lord JEHOVAH will cause righteousness to germinate,  
And praise before all the nations.

(f.) This form of parallelism—the *synonymous*, admits of five lines, and often employs them with great elegance. Thus in Isa. i. 15, quoted above, where the fifth line is given as *a reason* for what is affirmed in the second and fourth:

And when ye spread forth your hands,  
I will hide mine eyes from you ;  
And when ye multiply prayers,  
I will not hear :  
Your hands are full of blood !

In the stanza of five lines the odd line may come in between the two distichs. Thus in Isa. xlv. 7:

They bear him upon the shoulder, and they carry him ;  
 They set him in his place, and there he standeth ;  
     From his place shall he not remove—  
 Yea, one cries unto him, and he does not answer  
 Nor save him out of his trouble.

So, also, in Isa. l. 10:

Who is there among you that feareth JEHOVAH,  
 That obeyeth the voice of his servant,  
     Who walketh in darkness and seeth no light ?  
 Let him trust in the name of JEHOVAH ;  
 Let him stay himself upon his God.

II. A second form of the parallelism is the *antithetic*, in which the idea contained in the second clause is the converse of that in the first. This appears, also, with various modifications.

(a.) It occurs in a simple form. Prov. x. 1:

A wise son rejoiceth his father ;  
 But a foolish son is the grief of his mother.

(b.) A form of antithesis occurs, in which the second clause is the consequence of the first. Isa. i. 19, 20.

If ye be willing and obedient,  
 Ye shall eat the good of the land ;  
 But if ye refuse and rebel,  
 Ye shall be devoured with the sword.

(c.) Occasionally we meet with a double synonym and a double antithesis. Isa. i. 3:

The ox knoweth his owner,  
 And the ass the crib of his master ;  
     Israel knoweth not,  
     My people understand not.

(d.) Sometimes there is an alternate correspondence in the antithesis. Ps. xlv. 2:

Thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand,  
 And plantedst those ;  
 Didst destroy the nations,  
 And enlargedst those. *De Wette's Translation.*

(e.) A double antithetical form of the parallelism is not uncommon in the prophets. A very beautiful parallelism of this kind occurs in Habakkuk iii. 17, 18:

Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, \*  
 Neither shall fruit be in the vines ;  
 The buds of the olive shall fail,  
 And the fields shall yield no bread ;  
 The flock shall be cut off from the fold,  
 And there shall be no herd in the stall ;  
 Yet I will rejoice in the Lord,  
 I will joy in the God of my salvation.

Comp. Isa. ix. 10:

The bricks are fallen down,  
But we will build with hewn stone;  
The sycamores are cast down,  
But we will replace them with cedars.

III. The third form of the parallelism is that which is denominated by Lowth, the *synthetic*. In this, the parallelism consists only in the similar form of construction; where there is "a correspondence and equality between different propositions in respect to the shape and turn of the whole sentence, such as noun answering to noun, verb to verb, member to member, negative to negative, interrogative to interrogative."—*Lowth*. The poet, instead of merely echoing the former sentiment, or placing it in contrast, enforces his thought by accessory ideas and modifications. A general proposition is stated, and the sentiment is amplified or dwelt upon in detail. Thus in Isa. i. 5—9, the description of the punishment brought upon the Hebrews is continued through several verses, each heightening the effect of the preceding:

The whole head is sick, the whole heart faint,  
From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it;  
It is wound, and bruise, and running sore;  
They have neither pressed it nor bound it up,  
Neither hath it been softened with ointment.  
Your country is desolate;  
Your cities are burnt with fire:  
Your land—strangers devour it in your presence,  
And it is desolation, like the overturning produced by enemies.

So in Isa. lviii. 6, seq.:

Is not this the fast that I approve:  
To loose the bands of wickedness,  
To undo the heavy burdens,  
To free the oppressed,  
And to break asunder every yoke?  
Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry,  
And to bring the poor, that are cast out, into thy house?  
When thou seest the naked that thou clothe him,  
And that thou hide not thyself from thine own kindred?

A beautiful specimen of this kind of amplification occurs in the powerful passage in Job iii. 3—9, where he curses the day of his birth, and where he amplifies the thought with which he commences in the most impressive and solemn manner:

O that the day might have perished in which I was born,  
And the night which said, "A male child is conceived."  
Let that day be darkness,  
Let not God inquire after it from on high!

Yea, let not the light shine upon it!  
 Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it;  
 Let a cloud dwell upon it,  
 Let whatever darkens the day terrify it!

Examples of this kind of parallelism occur in abundance in the Scriptures, and especially in the Prophets.

Under this head may be included also a species of *alternate* parallelism, a form of poetic composition not uncommon. The following are specimens. Isa. li. 19:

These two things are come upon thee;  
 Who shall bemoan thee?  
 Desolation and destruction, famine and the sword;  
 How shall I comfort thee?

That is, taken alternately, desolation by famine, and destruction by the sword. Cant. i. 5:

I am black, but yet beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem;  
 Like the tents of Kedar, like the pavilions of Solomon.

That is, black as the tents of Kedar; beautiful as the pavilions of Solomon.

Under this head, also, may be mentioned a form of parallelism, of a highly artificial kind, called the introverted parallelism, where the fourth member answers to the first, and the third to the second. An instance of this kind occurs in the New Testament. Matt. vii. 6:

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs,  
 Neither cast ye your pearls before swine;  
 Lest they trample them under their feet,  
 And turn again and rend you.

Here it is the dogs mentioned in the first member which in the fourth it is said would turn and rend them; and the swine which it is said in the third member would trample under their feet the pearls mentioned in the second.

It may be added here, that the Arabic has no parallelism of members, as the Hebrew has, though both the modern Arabic and Persian have rhyme. Pococke, however, regards the Arabic metre as a late invention, and probably everywhere *rhyme* was invented long after poetry had existence in other forms.

In reading the Bible, it is of importance to understand the laws of poetic parallelism, for it often furnishes important facilities in interpretation. One member often expresses substantially the same sense as its parallel, and difficult words and phrases are thus rendered susceptible of easy explanation. The subject of Hebrew poetry is confessedly one of the most difficult pertaining to the study of the Bible, and all that is hoped from the above observa-

tions is to furnish some principles which may be applied in the study of the sacred Scriptures. Those who are desirous of pursuing the investigation further may consult the following works:—

Lowth's Introduction to Isaiah, and Lectures on Hebrew Poetry, particularly Lec. xix.; The Spirit of Hebrew Poetry, by J. G. Herder, translated by James Marsh, 2 vols. 12mo; De Wette, Einleitung in die Psalmen (translated in the Biblical Repository, vol. iii. p. 445, seq.); Nordheimer's Hebrew Grammar, vol. ii. p. 320, seq.; Theod. Eberti Poetica Hebraica; Davidis Lyra; autore Francisco Gomaro; Augusti Pfeifferi Diatribe de Poesi Heb.; and Francis Hare on the Psalms, found in Ugolin's Thesau. Sac. Ant., tom. xxxi.

In reference to the poetry in the book of Job, the following characteristics are discernible.

1. The leading feature of the Hebrew poetry—the *parallelism*—is observed with great strictness and perfection. In no part of the Old Testament are there more perfect specimens of this mode of composition. The parallels are, indeed, in general, of the more simple forms—where the second member corresponds with the first, with some slight modification of the meaning; and the instances are very rare, if they occur at all, where the more labored and artificial forms of the parallelism occur. Indeed, it may be doubted whether one instance of the *introverted* parallelism occurs in the book. This circumstance marks the early age of the poetry, and is an additional consideration to show that the book had an early origin.

II. Besides the parallelism, the poem bears the marks of a regular design or plan in its composition, and is constructed with a rigid adherence to the purpose which was in the mind of the author. I refer to the *tripartite* division of the book, and to the regularity observed in that division. The *trichotomy* appears, not only in respect to the longer divisions of the book, but also in respect to most of its minuter subdivisions. Thus we have in the grand division of the book (1.) the prologue; (2.) the poem proper; and (3.) the epilogue, or the conclusion. The *poem* presents also three leading divisions: (1.) the dispute or controversy of Job and his three friends; (2.) the address of Elihu, who proffers himself as umpire; and (3.) the address of God, who decides the controversy. In the controversy between Job and his friends, we find the same artificial arrangement. There are *three* series in the controversy, each having the same order, and without any deviation, except that in the last of the series, Zophar, whose turn it was to speak, fails to respond. No poem in any language exhibits a more artificial structure than this, and as this is the most striking feature in it, it may be proper to exhibit it at one view.

- I. The first series of the argument, ch. iv.—xiv.
  - (1.) With Eliphaz, ch. iv.—vii.
    - (a) Speech of Eliphaz, ch. iv., v.
    - (b) Reply of Job, ch. vi., vii.
  - (2.) With Bildad, ch. vii.—x.
    - (a) Speech of Bildad, ch. viii.
    - (b) Reply of Job, ch. ix., x.
  - (3.) With Zophar, ch. xi.—xiv.
    - (a) Speech of Zophar, ch. xi.
    - (b) Reply of Job, ch. xii.—xiv.
- II. The second series of the argument, ch. xv.—xxi.
  - (1.) With Eliphaz, ch. xv.—xvii.
    - (a) Speech of Eliphaz, ch. xv.
    - (b) Reply of Job, ch. xvi., xvii.
  - (2.) With Bildad, ch. xviii., xix.
    - (a) Speech of Bildad, ch. x viii.
    - (b) Reply of Job, ch. xix.
  - (3.) With Zophar, ch. xx., xxi.
    - (a) Speech of Zophar, ch. xx.
    - (b) Reply of Job, ch. xxi.
- III. The third series of the argument, ch. xxii.—xxxi.
  - (1.) With Eliphaz, ch. xxii.—xxiv.
    - (a) Speech of Eliphaz, ch. xxii.
    - (b) Reply of Job, ch. xxiii., xxiv.
  - (2.) With Bildad, ch. xxv., xxvi.
    - (a) Speech of Bildad, ch. xxv.
    - (b) Reply of Job, ch. xxvi.
  - (3.) With Zophar, ch. xxvii.—xxxi.
    - (a) \* \* \* \* \*
    - (b) Continuation of the reply of Job, ch. xxvii.—xxxi.

So also in the final address of Job (ch. xxvi.—xxxi.), there are three speeches, (a) ch. xxvi.; (b) ch. xxvii. xxviii.; (c) ch. xxix.—xxxi. In the speeches of Elihu, there is evidence of a design that a regular number of speeches should be made. The plan seems to have been, that to each of the speakers there should be assigned three speeches. But Zophar, one of the original disputants, had failed, when his regular turn came, and *four* speeches are allowed to Elihu. (1.) ch. xxxii. xxxiii.; (2.) ch. xxxiv; (3.) ch. xxxv.; and (4.) ch. xxxvi. xxxvii. In the controversy, the dispute appears to have been carried on through three days or sessions—perhaps with a considerable interval between them, and the most rigid order was observed during the debate. In like manner **JEHOVAH** is introduced as making three addresses, (1.) ch. xxxviii. xxxix.; (2.) ch. xl. 1, 2; and (3.) ch. xl. 6—24; ch. xli.; and last of all, the epilogue contains a similar subdivision. There is (1.) an account of Job's justification; (2.) his reconciliation with his friends; (3.) his restoration to prosperity, ch. xlii.

"If," says Prof. Stuart, (Intro. to the Apocalypse,) "we withdraw our attention from these obvious and palpable trichotomies, in respect to the larger portions of the book, and direct it to the

examination of the individual speeches which are exhibited, we shall find the like threefold division in many of them. If we descend still lower, even down to strophes, we shall there find that a great number consists of three members."

"Thus the economy of this book exhibits a regular and all-pervading series of trichotomies, most of them so palpable that none can mistake them. This seems to settle two things that have been called in question—viz., first, the highly artificial arrangement of the book; and secondly, that the prologue and the epilogue are essential parts of the work. The great contest about the genuineness of these, and also of the speech of Elihu, might have been settled long ago, had due attention been paid to the trichotomy of the book. It is proper to add, that notwithstanding the highly artificial arrangement of the poem, such is the skill of the writer in the combinations, that everything appears to proceed in a way which is altogether easy and natural."

Another circumstance evincing artificial arrangement is noticed by Eichhorn, *Einleitung*, § 640, vol. v. pp. 148—150. It is the *regular advance* in the argument, or the *increase* (das Wachsende) of zeal and ardour in the debaters. This is seen in the speeches of Job. "In the beginning he will not trust himself to contend with God, (ch. ix. 11;) then he wishes before his death to prove to him his innocence, (ch. xiii. 3;) then he sighs after a judicial hearing before God, (ch. xvi. 18;) then he affirms that it is certain that before his death God will appear to vindicate him, (ch. xix. 25;) and then at last he solemnly demands of him a judicial investigation." The same is true of the other speakers. "Eliphaz, who begins the controversy with Job, commences with mildness and gentleness; for the passion and heat with which he had heard Job speak, one gladly forgives to a sufferer. With Bildad, who speaks next, everything is more severe and bitter; the heat of Job had made his friends too warm, and he could not speak to Job with the gentleness and softness evinced by Eliphaz. And so also the manner of the individual speakers rises in warmth and interest. Eliphaz, the first time that he speaks, is mild and forbearing; the second time he is more ardent, and utters reproaches against Job, yet in a manner somewhat covered; but in the third speech he hides nothing, but charges him openly with being a hypocrite. The same thing is observable in the speeches of Bildad. In the beginning of his speeches he is more heated than Eliphaz, yet he condemns him only *conditionally* (bedingnissweis); in the second, he condemns him openly; and in the third, with cool contempt he tramples the sufferer under foot."

The same artificial mode of composition prevails elsewhere in the poetry of the Hebrews. See it more fully illustrated in the



Intro. to Isaiah, § 8. Thus we have seven Psalms, each verse of which begins with a letter of the alphabet in succession; Ps. xxv., xxxiv., xxxvii., cxi., cxii., cxix., cxlv. In Ps. cxix. we have this peculiarity, that each paragraph of it consists of eight verses, and these eight verses all begin with the same letter of the alphabet. In the book of Lamentations, four chapters out of the five are *alphabetic* compositions, while ch. iii. exhibits three verses in succession, each one of which begins with the same letter of the alphabet. This artificial mode of composition seems to have been one of the earliest features of Hebrew poetry, and in no part of the Bible is it more perfect than in the book of Job.

III. The true account of the book of Job, as a poem, is, that *it is a PUBLIC DEBATE, conducted in a poetic form, on a very important question pertaining to the divine government.* It is not an epic poem, where the hero is placed in a great variety of interesting and perilous situations, and where the main object is to create an interest in his behalf; it is not a drama, with a regular plot to be gradually developed, and where the dialogue is adopted to inculcate some moral lesson, or to awaken a tragic interest. It is a *public discussion*, with a real case in view, where the question is one of great difficulty, and where there is all the interest of reality. The question is fairly understood. The whole arrangement appears to have been made, or tacitly fallen into from a sense of propriety. The discussion is continued, evidently, on successive days, giving a full opportunity to weigh the arguments which had been previously advanced, and to frame a reply. The most respectful attention is paid to what is advanced. There is no rude interruption; no impatience; no disposition to correct the speaker; no outbreak of excited feeling even under the most provoking remarks. The *poetic form* in the argument is adopted manifestly because it would furnish the opportunity for expressing their sentiments in the most terse, beautiful, and sententious manner, and in a way which could be best retained in the memory, and which was most in accordance with the genius of the age. In all countries, poetry is among the earliest forms of composition; and in Arabia and the East generally, it has been customary to preserve their sentiments in the terse and somewhat proverbial form which is exhibited here.

If conjecture may be allowed in a case where it is now impossible to speak with certainty, and if we may be permitted to judge according to what *appears* to have been the fact in regard to this remarkable argument, we may imagine that the discussion assumed somewhat of this form:—Job, as related in ch. i. and ii., was suddenly overwhelmed with almost unparalleled calamity. All that he possessed was suddenly swept away; and he was visited with a form of disease of the most distressing nature. Of his character hitherto

there had been no doubt. His life had never given occasion to suspect him of insincerity. Three of his friends, apparently intimate with him before this—men of age, and prudence, and large experience, came to him with a full intention of sympathizing with him, and of suggesting to him the usual topics of consolation under trials. The greatness of his calamity, severe beyond what they had anticipated, struck them dumb with amazement, and they remained a long time speechless, apparently contemplating the keenness and the extent of his sufferings. It would be obvious that the *case* would present a grave one for consideration; that it would be in conflict with many of the maxims which they had cherished, as we learn from their expressions, subsequently, about the methods of the divine government with the pious. Here was an individual, esteemed universally as a man of eminent piety, who was now treated as if he were the most vile and abandoned of sinners. This *fact*, thus in conflict with their settled views, appears at first to have confounded them, and to have divested them of the power of offering the topics of consolation which they had intended. But it was not until Job made his first speech, (ch. iii.,) bitterly cursing his day, indulging in the language of murmuring and complaint, and wishing for death, that they seem to have had any confirmed suspicion of his insincerity and hypocrisy. That speech, in connexion with his remarkable sufferings, so much at variance with all their views of the manner in which God deals with the righteous, seems to have satisfied them, that so far from being, as had been supposed, a man of eminent piety, he was a man of eminent guilt. This, therefore, opened the whole field of debate, and suggested the great question whether the divine government was not conducted on equal principles here; whether a life of piety would not be attended with corresponding prosperity, and whether extraordinary sufferings like these were not demonstrative of corresponding guilt. Either tacitly, or by express arrangement, it seems to have been agreed to discuss this question. The *manner* of doing it was the best possible, and was in accordance with every principle of urbanity, justice, and refined feeling. Eliphaz, as the eldest, and as the most experienced and sagacious, led the way in the argument, to be followed, in the same order, during each *sitting* of the debate, by his two friends. Job, having no one to stand by him, and being the one most deeply concerned in the issue, is allowed to respond to each one of the speakers. Three successive series of arguments in this order gave to each one the privilege of expressing all that he desired to say on the point of debate; thus permitting each one of the friends of Job to speak three times, and Job himself to make nine addresses. It seems to have been understood that the debate should proceed in this order

until the third series should be completed, or until one party should cease to speak. The debate continued, in fact, until Zophar, whose turn it was, failed to speak—thus tacitly acknowledging defeat, and leaving the whole field open, and conceding that no reply could be made to Job. At this stage, Elihu, who appears to have been an attentive auditor, comes forward to do what the friends of Job tacitly confessed that they could not do—to reply to what had been advanced by Job. He comes modestly forward, and begs permission to state some considerations which had been suggested to him, and which he supposed would relieve all the difficulty. The divine interposition, unexpected by all except by Job, (comp. ch. xix. 25—29, Notes,) the indications of whose appearance in the tempest overwhelm the mind of Elihu with astonishment, and cause him abruptly to break off his address, (Notes on ch. xxxvii. 19—24,) closes the argument. “The whole book,” says Eichhorn, may be regarded as a dialogue of sages respecting the government of the world, with a prologue and an epilogue; a *consensus* of friends, as we find it among the Arabs of later times. In Casiri, Biblioth. Arab. Escur., t. i. p. 144, mention is made of a dialogue held by fifty-one artists, in which each one praises his own art.” Einleit. § 640, vol. v. p. 142.

By this supposition, it will be allowable to suppose that the debate may have occupied several days; for there is no evidence that it was completed at one sitting. By this supposition, also, some difficulties which have been felt in regard to its composition may be removed. (1.) It is not necessary to suppose that the addresses are *extemporary*; and the objection, that it is incredible that men in the heat of debate should utter such finished and sublime specimens of poetry, is of no force. All the time requisite for composing each successive speech may be allowed, and it may be presumed that each speaker came fully prepared to meet what had been advanced by the one who went before him. (2.) The same supposition will meet much of the difficulty which has been felt in regard to the speeches of Job. It has been said that it is wholly incredible that a man suffering under intolerable pain, and prostrate by long continued disease, should have uttered the sentiments which are here ascribed to him, and been able to reply as he did to the arguments of his opponents. To this difficulty it may be said in reply, that there is no evidence that his disease impaired his mental powers—for it is not *always* true that the faculties of the mind are enfeebled by bodily suffering; and further, that Job may have had ample time to mature his reflections, and to arrange them in such a manner as he would wish. (3.) This supposition may throw some light on the question of the authorship of the poem. According to this view, what would be necessary for the

author to do, would be, to prepare the introductory and concluding historical statements, and to collect and arrange the speeches which had been actually made. Those speeches would doubtless be preserved mostly in the memory, and the work to be done would be rather that of a *compiler* or *editor*, than that of an *author*. In the discussion pursued in the poem, the great inquiry propounded relates to the equality of the divine dealings, and this inquiry is conducted in the most interesting manner conceivable. An actual case of a pious sufferer existed, giving to the question all the interest of reality. It was not a mere abstract inquiry, examined in a cold and unfeeling manner; but it was a case which, while it admitted of all the illustration which could be derived from experience, observation, tradition, and profound reflection, had all the interest also to be derived from the warm feelings and even excited passions which the case of an actual sufferer is fitted to produce.

The main question discussed has respect to the distribution of good and evil in the world. It is an inquiry whether there is a righteous and equal retribution in the present life, and whether the dealings of God here are according to the character. In the discussion of this question, the three friends of Job maintain the affirmative—defending the position, that the character of an individual can be determined from the events which occur to him under the divine administration; that there is a course of things which favors the righteous, and brings calamity on the wicked; that where there is extraordinary prosperity there is extraordinary virtue, and that when overwhelming calamities come upon a man or a community, there is proof of extraordinary wickedness. On this principle they infer, that notwithstanding Job's professions in his prosperity, the calamities which had come upon him were full proof that he had been insincere, and that he must have been at heart a man of eminent wickedness. In defence of this opinion, they refer to their own observation; appeal to revelations, which they say they had had on this very point; adduce the maxims and adages which had been accumulated by their ancestors; and boldly maintain, that it *must* be so under the administration of a holy God.

Job as strenuously maintains the opposite opinion, with all the interest which can be derived from the fact that it is his own case, and that it involves the whole question about his own character, as well as from the fact that it is an inquiry about the general rectitude of the dealings of God with his creatures. He appeals to his consciousness of integrity; shows by abstract arguments that the opinions of his friends are not well founded; refers to general principles, to his own observation, and to the reports of travellers;

complains bitterly of the unkindness of his friends, and expresses an earnest desire to carry the cause up to God to get a hearing before him, with a confident assurance that he would at once decide it in his favor. He is evidently embarrassed by the arguments of his friends, and is unable to meet many things in their reasoning, and to explain *why* it is that the righteous are thus afflicted. He maintains only that their afflictions do *not* prove that they are bad men, and that the dealings of God with men are *not* a certain indication of their true moral character. There are two considerations which would have relieved his embarrassment, and which *we* would now use in such a case, but which did not occur to him : the one is, that the afflictions of the righteous may be *disciplinary*, and may be really a proof of paternal kindness on the part of God ; the other, that in the future state all the inequalities of the present life will be adjusted ; that though the good may suffer much here, they will be abundantly recompensed hereafter ; and that however prosperous the wicked may be here, the divine dealings in the future state will be entirely according to their character.

In reading the book of Job, we must remember that these truths were not then clearly revealed. We must place ourselves in the circumstances of the speakers, and look at the argument in view of the light which they had. We must not approach the book under the feeling that they had the same knowledge of the divine government, of the design of affliction, and of the doctrine of the future state, which we now have under the Christian dispensation. *Children* now, under the light of the gospel, may easily solve many questions on moral subjects which entirely confounded these sagacious ancient sages, just as children now can answer many questions in astronomy which perplexed and embarrassed the most profound Grecian and Roman philosophers.

The manner in which the great question about the equality of the divine administration is disposed of in this book, will be understood by a brief analysis of the argument, and by a statement of the points maintained by the different speakers.

1. In the commencement of the book, the reader is made acquainted with the character and the sufferings of the principal personage referred to. We are introduced to an inhabitant of the land of Uz, in the northern part of Arabia. He is a prince or an Emir in the place where he resided—honored and respected by all. He is a man of large property, whose life had been one of almost unexampled prosperity. He is surrounded by a large and interesting family, who are represented as enjoying themselves in the festivities usual in the place where they resided, and in a manner appropriate to their station and rank in life. The patriarch himself is a man of eminent holiness. He performs with faithfulness the

duties of a pious father, evinces the deepest concern that his children should not sin, and is declared to be a perfect and an upright man—a man whose character would bear the severest scrutiny. In this state of things, the scene is opened in heaven. The tribunal of the Almighty appears; an assembling of the sons of God occurs; and the celestial spirits are summoned before the Most High. Among those who come is Satan—an evil spirit—an accuser—a dark, malignant being, who is represented as having no confidence in human integrity, and who says that he has been through the earth to look on its affairs. Being asked respecting the character of this good man, he insinuates that all his religion is mere selfishness; that he could not be otherwise than a devout worshipper of God in the circumstances in which God had placed him; but that if his circumstances were changed, it would soon be apparent that all his professions were false and hollow. Permission is given to the evil spirit to make the trial, with the single reservation that the person of the man himself was to be untouched. Animated by this permission, Satan immediately leaves the heavenly council, and in a single day Job is stripped of his children and all his possessions. By the instrumentality of robbers, and whirlwinds, and storms, everything which he had is swept away, and messenger after messenger comes to him in rapid succession, acquainting him with these calamities. Still the integrity of the patriarch remains. He sits down patient and resigned. Not a word of murmuring escapes from his lips, not a complaining thought seems to have been in his heart. The trial is thus far complete; the insinuation of Satan is shown to be unfounded, and piety is triumphant.

The celestial session is held again, and Satan again appears. Foiled in his first attempt, he now insinuates that the trial had not been fair; that there could be no real, thorough trial of the character of a man unless he were made personally to suffer, and his life were placed in jeopardy. If a man were himself spared to enjoy health, it was not yet certainly known what his true character was, for he might still be purely selfish. If he were made personally to suffer, he says that, so far from maintaining his integrity, he would curse God to his face. Permission is given to make this trial also, with the single reservation that his life was to be spared. The evil spirit again goes forth, selects the most painful and loathsome form of disease consistent with the preservation of life, and Job becomes an object of loathing and abhorrence even to his friends. Still this trial results as the former did. The integrity of the patriarch is preserved, and religion again triumphs. Satan is thus far foiled, and appears no more on the scene. The best man on the earth is made the most miserable; the man that was most prospered in the East is reduced to the lowest state of poverty and wretchedness.

But his virtue has survived it all; and it is seen that fidelity to God can be maintained in the most sudden reverses and in the deepest distresses which the body can be made to endure short of death.

In this state of things, three of his friends, who had heard of his calamities, are represented as coming by agreement to condole with him. When they arrive, however, they have nothing to say. The sufferings of their friend appear to be beyond anything which they had anticipated; and the topics of consolation which they had purposed to use are found insufficient, and they sit down in silent astonishment. The overwhelming calamities which had come upon an eminently good man seem to have confounded them, but still they do not yet express a doubt, if they cherished a suspicion, about his integrity. The subject is evidently one that, in their view, demands grave reflection, and that presents some deep inquiries about the reason of the divine dealings. They were probably overcome by the unexpected severity of his sufferings and the depth of their sympathetic sorrow, but they were perplexed also, because it seems to have conflicted with their cherished views of the divine government, that such trials should come upon so good a man; and it is *possible* that, in accordance with these views, a *suspicion* may have already been started in their minds that he was less holy than he had been reputed to be. Still, if they had any doubts about the integrity of their friend, his perfect patience and resignation seem thus far to have silenced or removed them, or their courtesy kept them from expressing them, and not knowing what to say, they sat down in silence. It was only the bitter language of complaint of the sufferer himself (ch. iii.) that led them to adopt the conclusion that their much venerated and esteemed friend *must* have been a bad man.

2. The second, or principal, part of the work, comprises the discussion between Job and his three friends, and extends from the third to the thirty-first chapter. The discussion is brought on by the bitter complaints of Job, as recorded in ch. iii. Up to this time his friends had been silent. If they had had any suspicion of his integrity, they had not until then expressed it. His complaints and murmurings, however, now gave them occasion to express their feelings without reservation. They commence the discussion respecting the causes of human suffering. They hold the doctrine of a strict retribution in the present life; maintain that misery always implies corresponding guilt; defend the opinion that it is fair to infer what a man's character is from the dealings of God with him; and do not hesitate to express the opinion, that the calamities of Job must have been brought upon him in consequence of his secret wickedness. Job repels their insinuations with indignation,

and boldly asserts his innocence. He knows not why he suffers. He is unable to explain the causes why calamities come upon good men, but he maintains that they are no certain indications of the character of the sufferer. He regards himself as unkindly treated by his friends; complains that they are not disposed to do him justice; affirms that instead of offering him the consolation which they ought, they have taken occasion to aggravate his woes by false and severe accusations; and expresses a desire to carry the cause directly before God himself, assured that *he* would do him that justice which was denied him by his friends. His friends are offended at his sentiments, and undertake to vindicate the conduct of the Deity towards him, and repeat the charges with greater asperity, and even accuse him of particular crimes. But the more they press the argument, the more confidently does he assert his innocence, and the more boldly does he appeal to God to vindicate his character. His friends are finally reduced to silence, Bildad, in the last series of the controversy, closing the discussion by a few general maxims—of great beauty, but without any pertinency to the cause—on the greatness of God, and Zophar, who should have replied, in his turn, to Job, not saying anything.

In this controversy, as has been already remarked, there are three series, or sessions, conducted with great regularity, and carried on in the same order. Eliphaz is the first speaker, Bildad the second, and Zophar the third; and Job replies to each.

The *first* series of the discussion extends from ch. iv. to ch. xiv. Eliphaz commences it, chaps. iv., v. He probably had the precedence among those engaged in the discussion, both on account of age and experience. He is more mild than either of the others, depends more on close reasoning and observation, and is less severe in his reflections on his friend. His speech commences with delicacy and an air of candor, and is conducted with artful address. After apologizing, in a tender manner, for speaking, he proceeds to point out the inconsistency of a good man's repining under discipline; says that Job had counselled and comforted many others, and ought now to show that the same considerations were sufficient to sustain himself, and that it is absurd that *he* should not bear up under trial who had so often exhorted others to fortitude. He then advances the position that the truly righteous are never overthrown, and that no one who was innocent ever perished; that the wicked are dealt with according to their sins, and that the ways of God must be just. This position he proceeds to establish by a vision, which he says he himself had had, of a most remarkable character, affirming the uprightness of the divine dealings, and declaring that man could not be more just than his Maker, and that even the angels were charged with folly before God. The *object* of this, as



applied by Eliphaz, is to meet the complaints of Job, and to show that God *must* be right in his ways. He admits (ch. v.) that the wicked may prosper for a while, but asserts that they will meet with sudden calamity ; that their habitation will be suddenly cursed, their children crushed in the gate, and their property carried away by robbers. He does not expressly apply this to Job, but he leaves no doubt that it was intended for him, and advises Job even now to turn to God, and assures him that he may yet find happiness, and come to the grave in an honored old age.

Job replies to Eliphaz (chaps. vi., vii.), and justifies himself for complaining. He says that there was a good reason for his complaints ; expresses again the earnest wish to die ; declares that his strength is not equal to the weight of woes laid on him ; complains severely of his friends for having wholly disappointed his reasonable expectations ; and compares them to the deceitful brook of the desert, which wholly disappoints the hopes of the faint and thirsty traveller. He says that he had not *asked* them to come and sympathize with him, but that even now, if they would make use of solid argument, he would listen to them. He then (ch. vii.) proceeds to a more impassioned description of his sufferings, as being wholly beyond endurance ; expresses again the wish to die ; says that he is not a monster, like a whale, that God should pursue him in this manner ; and complains of God, in language highly irreverent, as having punished him far beyond his deserts, and as having set a special mark on *him*, and asks with impatience why he will *not* let him alone ?

Bildad is the next one to speak, ch. viii. He commences his address in a most severe and provoking manner. He openly declares that the children of Job had been cut off for their transgressions, and that Job was a wicked man. If he were pure and upright, God would at once interpose and restore his prosperity. He exhorts him, therefore, as Eliphaz had done, to repent, and enforces his sentiments by a reference to the opinions of the men of former days. In accordance with those sentiments, he says that the hypocrite must be soon destroyed ; that however flourishing and prosperous he may appear, he is like succulent plants, that spring up with rapid growth and are soon withered ; and that his hope will be like the spider's web. He does not expressly apply these maxims to Job, but he leaves no doubt on the mind that he intends it, and that he fully believes that this principle will fully account for all that he had suffered ; or, in other words, that in the midst of all his prosperity he had been a mere hypocrite.

To Bildad, Job replies in his turn, ch. ix., x. He commences in a calm manner, and shows that he is superior to the acrimony of the assault. He acknowledges that all power is with God, and

confesses that he has a right to universal supremacy. He controls the heavens and the earth, rules among the stars and directs them, and nothing can stand before the exertion of his power. He acknowledges that he is far from being perfect, and says that, even if this were his private feeling, he would not dare to assert it before God. He could not engage in so unequal a contest where he should regard him as guilty, but he must yield his own views to those of God. Still he maintains that the position of his friends cannot be defended; that the earth is given into the hands of the wicked; and that so far from its being true that the dealings of God are according to the character of men, and are a fair illustration of their character, it is matter of fact that the wicked are triumphant and prosperous. Then he adverts to his own sorrow, says that his days are fast flying away amid grief, and complains bitterly that, notwithstanding all his attempts *to be* innocent and holy, God holds and treats him *as if* he were a guilty man. Though he should wash himself in the purest water, yet God throws him in the ditch, and regards and treats him as if he were most vile. He complains that he has no fair opportunity of vindicating himself before God, and that he presses him down with sorrows so that he cannot make a defence; but says that if he would remove his rod from him, and give him the opportunity of a fair trial, he would speak, and would vindicate himself. Becoming more excited as he proceeds (ch. x.), he gives himself up to complaint. He becomes desperate at the idea that God has become his enemy and persecutor; speaks of him as if he were seeking an opportunity to inflict pain under some plausible pretence; complains that he had made him, as if with exquisite skill, only to torment and destroy him; says that he hunts him with the fierceness of a lion; expresses regret again that he had not died on the day of his birth; and entreats of God to let him alone only for a little time, till he should go down to the deep shades of death.

Zophar, the third speaker, now takes his place in the argument, and replies, ch. xi. He commences, as Bildad did, with violent invective. He regards Job as a man of words without sense; and reproaches him for maintaining his innocence before God. He says that the ways of God are plain, and earnestly desires that God would himself speak to Job, and is assured that he would then see that it was his own iniquities that had brought these calamities upon him. He refers, in magnificent language, to the supremacy of God; says that he fully understands the secret character of men; and, like Eliphaz and Bildad, exhorts Job to acknowledge his transgressions, and assures him that if he would do this, he would be restored to prosperity, and yet end his days in peace.

To Zophar, Job replies, ch. xii., xiii., xiv. Yet he does not

answer him personally. As they had all maintained the same sentiments, he groups them together, and commences, in turn, with a severe sarcasm. He says that no doubt wisdom would die with them, and reproaches them for their cool self-complacency and their arrogance in supposing that they were wiser than all the rest of mankind. In return for their traditionary maxims, he retorts in the same manner, and shows them that he is as much at home in this kind of argument as they can be. He therefore adduces a large number of proverbial sayings (ch. xii.), of far more pertinency and point than many of those on which they relied, all going to show the majesty, the power, and the supremacy of God. He then (ch. xiii.) commences a direct attack on their motives, and charges them with maintaining their opinions with the hope of propitiating the favor of God. To do this, he says, they had employed unsound arguments; had evinced partiality for God; had been unwilling to yield the proper weight to the considerations adduced on the other side; and that they had really no regard for the *truth* in the case, but were "special" and partial pleaders. He says that they ought to be awed and to tremble in view of such a fact; that they were really mocking God by undertaking to defend his government by such reasons as they had adduced; and that they had great reason to dread his investigation of their motives, even when they were pretending to vindicate his government. Alike in the principles of government which they ascribed to him, and the arguments by which they undertook to vindicate him, they were offensive to him, and must apprehend his displeasure. Weary with this mode of argumentation, he then expresses the earnest wish that he might carry his cause directly before the tribunal of God, and manage it there, on equal terms, for himself. He would go before God in this cause, confident that he would do right, and resolved to trust him even though he should slay him, ch. xiii. 15. He would ask of him only two things—one was, that he would withdraw his hand from him so that he might be able to do justice to himself in the argument; the other was, that he would not take advantage of his great power to overawe him, so that he could say nothing. He then reverts to his calamities, speaks of them as overwhelming, and closes his address (ch. xiv.) with a most beautiful and pathetic description of the frailty and the shortness of life. He says that God removes man from all his comforts, and hides him in the grave, hopeless of a return to the land of the living, and that his condition is even more sad and desolate than that of the tree that is cut down. Thus ends the *first* series in the controversy. The *second* commences with ch. xv., and extends to the close of the twenty-first chapter. It is pursued in the same order, and with the same question in view.

Eliphaz, as before, opens the discussion, ch. xv. He accuses Job of vehemence and vanity; charges him with casting off fear and restraining prayer; says that his own mouth condemned him; blames him for his arrogance and presumption in speaking as if he were the first man that had lived; declares that with himself were men far more advanced in life than Job was, and even older than his father; and asks him whether he had been admitted to the secret counsels of the Almighty, that he spoke so confidently of the nature of his government. He then enters into a vindication of God; proposes to adduce the observations of the sages of ancient times, in the purer days when there was no foreign admixture in the sentiments of his country; and maintains that, in accordance with those sentiments, and with the settled course of events, God deals with wicked men according to their character. This opinion he illustrates with great beauty, and by a large number of apothegms, showing that the wicked man is subject to sudden alarms; that in prosperity the destroyer comes suddenly upon him; that he wanders abroad for bread; that he is made to dwell in desolate cities; that all his prosperity fails, like the shaking off of fruit before it is ripe; and that he is like a tree dried up by heat.

To this speech of Eliphaz, Job replies in his turn, ch. xvi., xvii. He renews his complaint of the severe manner in which his friends had treated him, and says that he could easily speak as they did, but if his case were theirs, he would meet them with consolatory words. But now, he says, it makes no difference whether he speaks or is silent. He finds no consolation if he speaks; he meets with no relief though he is silent. He then adverts with new bitterness of feeling, and in still more severe and irreverent language, to the intensity of his sufferings, and to their manifest injustice. He compares his enemies to a wild beast, gnashing his teeth and casting a furious glance upon him; says that God had given him over to the ungodly; that he was at ease, when God came upon him like a hunter, and stationed his archers around him; that he had come upon him like an army attacking a city, "breach upon breach;" and that all this was *not* because he was wicked, for his hands were pure. He then calls upon the earth to cover his blood, and says that, after all, his only appeal is to God, and before him his eyes poured out tears. In ch. xvii. he continues the description of his sufferings, and says that the record of his trials will yet be a subject of amazement to good men which they will not be able to understand, and that all his plans are now broken off, and that he *must* make the grave his house and his bed in darkness.

To this address of Job, Bildad replies in his turn, ch. xviii. He begins by repeating the accusation before made, that the argument

of Job was made up merely of vain words. He accuses him of arrogance and a presumptuous idea of his own importance—as if the settled course of events were to be made to give way on his account. He says that the great laws of the divine administration are fixed, and that it is an established maxim that the wicked shall be punished in this life. This sentiment he proceeds to enforce by a number of beautiful adages or proverbs. The light of the wicked shall be put out; the candle in his dwelling shall be extinguished; he shall be cast down by his own counsel; the gin shall suddenly take him; the robber shall come upon him; his strength shall vanish; terrors shall surprise him; his roots shall perish; his memory shall perish; he shall be chased out of the world; he shall have neither son nor nephew; and all that come after him shall hold him up as an example of the manner in which God deals with the wicked. Bildad advances nothing new, but he enforces what had been said before with great emphasis, and urges it as if it were so settled that it *could* not admit of dispute. He does not, in the description of the evils that come upon the wicked, refer to Job by name, but he presents his argument in such a way as to leave no doubt that he designs to have it applied to him. There is much refinement of cruelty in this, and he doubtless *meant* that it should be keenly felt by Job.

In the reply of Job to Bildad, (ch. xix.,) he shows that he felt it deeply. His speech on this occasion is one of the most pathetic parts of the poem, and exhibits his character in a most beautiful light. He commences, as usual, with the language of sorrow, but it is with a tender and subdued spirit. He asks his friends how long they will continue to vex him, and crush him with their remarks; says that they had reproached him ten times, and had made themselves strange to him; and declares that *if* he had erred, his error was his own, and remained with himself. He then gives a most affecting description of his sufferings. God had overthrown him; he had fenced up his way; he had taken the crown from his head; he had removed all his hopes; he had put away from him his brethren and friends, his kinsfolk and acquaintance; he had made him an object of reproach to his servants; his wife was estranged from him, and he was derided even by children. In most impassioned language he calls on his friends to pity him, for the hand of God had touched him. Then follows the most noble and sublime declaration, perhaps, to be found in the book. Conscious of the importance of what he was about to say, he asks that his words might be engraved on the eternal rock, and then professes his unwavering confidence in God, and his firm assurance that he would yet appear and fully vindicate his character. Though now consumed by disease, and though this process should still go

on till all his flesh was wasted away, yet he had the firmest conviction that God would appear on the earth to deliver him, and that with renovated flesh, and in prosperity, he would be permitted to see God for himself. For a view of the reasons for this interpretation of this sublime passage, the reader is referred to the Notes on the chapter.

Zophar now speaks in his turn, ch. xx. But he speaks only to recapitulate the old argument under a new form. He maintains the position which had been so often before advanced, that certain and dreadful calamity must overtake the wicked. This thought he puts into new forms, and urges it with a variety of proverbial illustrations and bold statements, but without much that is new in the argument. He undoubtedly means, like the previous speakers, to have Job apply this to himself, though he does not expressly declare it.

Job replies to Zophar, (ch. xxi.,) and his reply closes the second session of the controversy. He collects all his strength for the argument, as though he were resolved at once to answer all that had been said. He calls upon them attentively to mark what he has to urge; and says that if they will now hear him, they may then mock on. He then proceeds to answer their arguments by appealing to well-known and indisputable *facts*. He says that the wicked live—grow old—become mighty in power—are prospered in their flocks and herds—send forth their children to the dance—and spend their days in wealth and enjoyment, and then go down to the grave without long and lingering pain. He says that they openly cast off the fear of God, and live in irreligion. Yet he admits that it is not *always* so; that the candle of the wicked is sometimes put out, and that sorrows are laid up for their children; so that no universal rule can be laid down in regard to the dealings of God with men here. He alleges that, in fact, there is the greatest variety in the manner in which people die—one dying in full strength, cut down in his vigor, and another in the bitterness of his soul, having had no pleasure. He says that the wicked are *reserved* for the day of destruction—for some future retribution, and that they will be hereafter brought forth to wrath. By this appeal to *facts*, he evidently supposed that the controversy would be ended. Of the *facts* he had no doubt; and these facts were of more value than all speculations on the subject.

The *third* session of the discussion, like the previous ones, is opened by Eliphaz, ch. xxii. This is the last speech which Eliphaz makes, and roused by the argument of Job in the previous chapter, and excited by his appeal to *facts*, he pours forth his soul in one grand effort to confute the position which he had taken. There is great art in this speech, and greater severity than he had

before used. He begins by maintaining that a man could not be profitable to God, and that he could not be influenced in his dealings with men by any claim which they had on him, or any dread which he had of them. No rank, authority, or eminence could prevent his dealing with them as he pleased. He then, in open and bold terms, charges Job with great guilt; says that these calamities *could* not have come upon a man unless there had been extraordinary iniquity, and proceeds to argue *as if* this were so, and to state what crimes Job must have committed to make it necessary to bring such calamities upon him. He accuses him of cruelty, oppression, and injustice in the performance of his duties as a magistrate; affirms that he had wronged the poor, the widow, and the fatherless; says that he had wholly disregarded the laws of hospitality, and that it was no wonder that, in view of these things, such heavy calamities had come upon him. It could not be otherwise. God could have dealt with him in no other way than this. He then appeals, with great force, to the deluge, and says that that was a case which demonstrated that God would deal with the wicked according to their character and deserts. In view of these things, he again counsels Job to acquaint himself with God, and to be at peace with him. He assures him that if he would confess his sins and return to God, he would yet have prosperity, and be able to lay up gold as dust; and that if he prayed to God, he would be propitious to him. He would become yet a counsellor to the feeble, and be exalted to honor in the land.

Job, in his turn, replies, ch. xxiii., xxiv. He commences in a most pathetic and tender manner. He turns away from every human helper, and looks to God. He had looked to earthly friends in vain; and finding there no consolation, he expresses the most earnest wish that he might be able to carry his cause at once before his Maker. Could he come before him, as he wished, he would plead his cause there, and there he would find One who *would* hear him, and would know why it was that he was thus afflicted. He could not now explain it, yet *God* would do it, if he was permitted to carry his cause before him. Yet he could not find him. He looked in every direction for some token of his appearing, in vain. He went east, and west, and north, and south—in the quarters of the heavens where he usually manifested himself, but he could not find him. Notes on vs. 9, 10. Yet he had the firmest confidence in him, and he felt assured that, when he had been tried, he would come forth as gold. He asserts his consciousness of integrity, and says that it had been the great aim of his life to honor and obey God. He then proceeds (ch. xxiv.) to defend his former position, and affirms, that so far from its being true that the dealings of God were in accordance with the character of men here, it was *a fact* that the wicked often lived long and in

great prosperity. He refers to large classes of the wicked—to those who remove the landmarks—to those who take the property of the widow and the fatherless for a pledge—to those who live by plunder—to those who oppress the poor and turn them out without shelter—to those who cause others to labor under hard exactions—to the murderer who rises early to accomplish his purpose—to the adulterer; and to all who perform deeds of darkness. He says that they often have, in fact, long prosperity, though he admits that they will be ultimately cut off; they are only exalted for a little time, and then they will be brought low.

These facts being undeniable, Bildad, whose turn it was to answer, does not attempt to reply to them. The argument of Job, from what actually occurs, had settled the question, and, so far as the friends of Job were concerned, decided the controversy. Bildad, indeed, ch. xxv., attempts something like a reply; but it consists merely of a description of the power, wisdom, and majesty of God, and closes with the sentiment twice before expressed concerning the comparative impurity and insignificance of man—a reply that, however beautiful, has no relevancy to the considerations stated by Job. The manner in which he speaks is, in fact, a yielding of the argument, and a retiring from the field of debate.

Job, who next speaks, in reply to Bildad, ch. xxvi., opens his address in a strain of bitter irony. "How had the feeble, the powerless, and the ignorant [referring to himself] been strengthened, helped, and enlightened by this wise speech!" He inquires of Bildad by whose spirit he had spoken, and who had helped him to utter such marvellous things! He then proceeds himself to expatiate on the topic on which Bildad had proposed to enlighten him—the greatness and majesty of God, and does it in such a manner as to show that his own views were far more elevated than those of Bildad, and that he was far in advance of his professed teacher in his knowledge of the character and government of God. In this sublime description, he states his views of the creation; says that the deep, dark world of the shades is open before God; that he stretched out the north over the immense void, and hung the earth upon nothing; that he binds up the thick clouds, holds back the face of his throne, compasses the waters with bounds so that they cannot pass, divides the sea with his power; and that by his own hands he had formed the beautiful constellations of the heavens. There is not to be found anywhere a more sublime description of God, nor a passage of more exquisite beauty, than that with which he closes:

Lo! these are but the outlines of his ways!  
And how faint the whisper which we hear of him!  
[Should he speak with] the thunder of his power, who could  
understand him?



This was the appropriate place for Zophar to reply, and Job evidently paused to give him an opportunity. But he had nothing to say, and the argument on the part of the three friends of Job is closed.

Finding that no one replies to him, Job proceeds, in a more calm manner, to a full vindication of himself, ch. xxvii.—xxx. He states further his views about the government of God, and especially in reference to his dealings with a hypocrite, (ch. xxvii. ;) gives a most beautiful description of the search for wisdom, detailing many of the discoveries of science known in his time, and saying that no one of them could disclose it, and concluding by saying that true wisdom could be found only in the fear of the Lord, (ch. xxviii. ;) affectingly contrasts his present condition with his former prosperity, (ch. xxix., xxx. ;) maintains the integrity of his life, asserting that he was free from the crimes charged on him, and imprecating the severest punishment if he had been guilty; and closes by saying, that if God would come forth and pronounce a just judgment on him, he would take the decision and bind it on his head as a diadem, and march forth with it in triumph. For the train of thought in these beautiful chapters, the reader is referred to the "Analysis" prefixed to the Notes.

3. Thus far Job is triumphant. He has silenced his "friends," and gained the field as a victor. At this stage a new character is introduced, who comes with great apparent modesty, and yet with great pretensions. It is Elihu. He had evidently listened to the debate, and feels indignant that no one of the three friends of Job dared to reply to him. He is young and comparatively inexperienced, and hence he had thus far taken no part in the controversy. But he professes to have had views communicated to him by divine revelation, which clear up all the difficulties in the case; and he proceeds to state them. The single additional thought on which he dwells so much, and which he introduces with so much pomp and parade of language, is, *that afflictions are for the good of the sufferer*, and that if those who are afflicted will hearken to the counsel which God sends, and turn from their sins, they will find their afflictions to be sources of great benefit. This leading thought he exhibits in various lights, and evidently supposes that it would be sufficient to solve the difficulties which had been felt in the discussion. It is remarkable that it had not been made more prominent by Job and his friends; and it is from the fact that it had not been particularly adverted to, that leads Elihu to place it in such a variety of view. In the course of his speech there is much severe reflection on Job for his rashness and presumption, and the general tenor of the address is, undoubtedly, to coincide with the "friends" of Job in their views, rather than in his. The thirty-second chapter

is wholly introductory, in which he expresses great modesty, and apologizes for his speaking, by saying that he was grieved that no one replied to Job, and that he was constrained to reply by the pressure of important thoughts on his mind. In ch. xxxiii. he enters on his argument, and says that he was inspired of God to say what he had to communicate: that as Job had *wished* to bring his cause before God, he was now in the place of God, and that Job need not be overawed by one of the same nature with himself. He then adverts to what he understood Job to maintain, that he was innocent; and says that in this he could not be correct, but that God must be more righteous than man. He then adverts to the main thought which he had to communicate, that God speaks to man in various ways, by dreams, by visions, and by afflictions,—to withdraw him from his purpose, and to save him from sin. If God sends a messenger to him when he is afflicted, and he turns from his sins, then he is merciful to him, and he is restored to more than his former prosperity. To this fact Elihu calls the particular attention of Job, and then pauses for a reply. As Job says nothing, Elihu, in ch. xxxiv., proposes more particularly to examine his case. He then proceeds to state that Job had manifested a very improper spirit; that he had been irreverent, and had maintained that it was of no advantage for a man to serve God. He then advances the position that God cannot do wickedly, and proceeds to illustrate this by showing that he is supreme, that it is presumptuous for man to arraign his dealings, and that, in fact, his government is administered on the principles of equity. On the basis of this, and assuming that Job was a wicked man, he calls on him to confess that his chastisement was just, and to resolve to offend no more. In ch. xxxv., he charges Job with having, in fact, maintained that his own righteousness was more than that of God. *This* position he proceeds to examine, and to show, which he does with great conclusiveness, that it is impossible that the righteousness of man can be in any way profitable to God. He admits that a man's righteousness might be of advantage to his fellow-man, but maintains that it could not affect God. He then proceeds to show that the true reason why God did not interpose when men were afflicted, and remove their calamities, was, that they were obstinate and perverse, and that no one cried to God, who alone could give consolation. Elihu, having undertaken to vindicate the character of God, proceeds, in ch. xxxvi., xxxvii., to state some of the great principles of his government, and to maintain that God was right. He says that there yet remains much to be said on the part of God. Job, as he understood, had maintained that his government was administered on no settled principles. In opposition to this, Elihu asserts that God is mighty, and that

his government is not to be despised; that he will not prosper the wicked; that, in fact, he protects the righteous and vindicates the cause of the poor; and that his eye is on all. If they are in affliction, and bound in fetters, it is in order that they may see their iniquity and be brought to true repentance. The hypocrites, he says, heap up wrath, but the poor and afflicted are delivered, and Job would have found favor if he had been truly penitent. Elihu counsels him to beware lest his refusal to submit to God, and to exercise true repentance, should be the occasion of his entire destruction. To illustrate his views, and to show the necessity of submission, he closes his speech (ch. xxxvi. 26—33, ch. xxxvii.) with a sublime description of the greatness of God, especially as manifested in the storm and tempest. There is in this description every indication that a storm was actually rising, and that a fearful tempest was gathering. In the midst of this approaching tempest, the address of Elihu is broken off, and the Almighty appears and closes the debate. See the Analysis to ch. xxxvii.

4. The fourth part of the book consists of the address of the Almighty, chaps. xxxviii.—xli. This sublime discourse is represented as made from the midst of the tempest or whirlwind which Elihu describes as gathering. In this address, the principal object of God is to assert his own greatness and majesty, and the duty of profound submission under the dispensations of his government. The general thought is, that he is Lord of heaven and earth; that all things have been made by him, and that he has a right to control them; and that in the works of his own hands he had given so much evidence of his wisdom, power, and goodness, that men ought to have unwavering confidence in him. He appeals to his works, and shows that, in fact, man could explain little, and that the most familiar objects were beyond his comprehension. It was, therefore, to be expected that in his moral government there would be much that would be above the power of man to explain. In this speech, the creation of the world is first brought before the mind in language which has never been equalled. Then the Almighty refers to various things in the universe that surpass the wisdom of man to comprehend them, or his power to make them—to the laws of light; the depths of the ocean; the formation of the snow, the rain, the dew, the ice, the frost; the changes of the seasons, the clouds, the lightnings; and the instincts of animals. He then makes a particular appeal to some of the more remarkable inhabitants of the air, the forest, and the waters, as illustrating his power. He refers to the gestation of the mountain-goats; to the wild ass, to the rhinoceros, to the ostrich, and to the horse, ch. xxxix. The ground of the argument in this part of the address is, that he had adapted every kind of animals to the mode of life which it was to lead;

that he had given cunning where cunning was necessary, and where unnecessary, that he had withheld it; that he had endowed with rapidity of foot or wing where such qualities were needful; and that where power was demanded, he had conferred it. In reference to all these classes of creatures, there were peculiar laws by which they were governed; and all, in their several spheres, showed the wisdom and skill of their Creator. Job is subdued and awed by these exhibitions, and confesses that he is vile, ch. xl. 3—5. To produce, however, a more overpowering impression of his greatness and majesty, and to secure a deeper prostration before him, the Almighty proceeds to a particular description of two of the more remarkable animals which he had made—the behemoth, or hippopotamus, and the leviathan, or crocodile; and with this description, the address of the Almighty closes.

The general impression designed to be secured by this whole address is that of awe, reverence, and submission. The general thought is, that God is supreme; that he has a right to rule; that there are numberless things in his government which are inexplicable by human wisdom; that it is presumptuous in man to sit in judgment on his doings; and that at all times man should bow before him with profound adoration. It is remarkable that in this address, the Almighty does not refer to the main point in the controversy. He does not attempt to vindicate his government from the charges brought against it of inequality, nor does he refer to the future state as a place where all these apparent inequalities will be adjusted. For the *reasons* of this, see the remarks at the close of the Notes on ch. xli.

5. The whole work now closes, ch. xlii. Job is humbled and penitent. His confession is accepted, and his general course is approved. His three friends are reprimanded for the severity of their judgment on him, and he is directed to make intercession for them. His calamities are at an end, and he is restored to double his former prosperity, and is permitted to live long in affluence and respectability. Thus God shows himself in the end to be the friend of the righteous; and thus the great object of the trial is fully secured—by showing that there is true virtue which is not based on selfishness, and that real piety will bear any trial to which it can be subjected.

## VI.

### *The canonical authority and inspiration of the book.*

The canonical authority of the book of Job, or its right to a place among the inspired Scriptures, is determined on the same principles as the other books of the Old Testament. The argument for this

rests mainly on two considerations, which have generally been regarded as satisfactory by those who hold to the divine mission of the Saviour, and the inspiration of the apostles. The first is, that it was found in the canon of the Jewish Scriptures to which the Saviour gave his sanction as inspired; and the other is, that it is quoted in the New Testament as of divine authority.

In regard to the first of these, there can be no doubt that it existed among the books which were regarded by the Hebrews as inspired. It has the same evidence of this kind which exists in favor of any one of the books of the Old Testament. There is the same authority—arising from the opinions of the Jews, from the existence of manuscripts, from the ancient versions, from repeated quotations, from extended commentaries, and from the enumeration of the books of divine inspiration in the ancient catalogues—in favor of the book of Job, which there is for any one of the books of Moses or of the prophets. The argument from this source is thus stated by Wemyss: "The Seventy translated it about 277 years before Christ; Josephus places it among the historical writings; Philo the Jew quotes a fragment of it; part of it is evidently imitated by Baruch; the subject of it is mentioned in the book of Tobit; and in the catalogue of Jewish canonical books, drawn up by Melito, Bishop of Sardis, near the end of the second century, we find it inserted after the Song of Songs, on the supposition that it was written by Solomon. Jerome introduced it into the Vulgate, and almost all the Fathers of the Church have quoted it. The Talmud places it after the book of Psalms, so that Jews and Christians equally acknowledge its canonicity," p. 6. It was in reference to this entire collection that the Saviour gave to the Jews of his time the direction, "Search the Scriptures." John v. 39. And it was of this entire collection that the apostle Paul said, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Tim. iii. 16.

The other argument for the canonical authority and inspiration of the book of Job is the fact that it is quoted in the New Testament. It is introduced by the same formula, and evidently with the belief that it sustains the same rank as the other books of the inspired volume. It is true that it is but twice quoted directly, but that is sufficient to show that the writers of the New Testament, in common with all the Jews, regarded it as of divine authority. The quotations in the New Testament are the following

Job v. 13:

"He taketh the wise in their own craftiness,"

quoted in 1 Cor. iii. 19, where Paul introduces the quotation by

the words, "It is written," agreeably to the common form of quoting from the other parts of Scripture.

Job xxxix. 30 :

"Her young ones suck up blood;  
And where the slain are, there is she," i. e., the eagle.

This is evidently referred to by the Saviour, Matt. xxiv. 28, "For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together," and Luke xvii. 37. It must, in candor, however, be admitted that the argument from this source rests mainly on the former passage, as the remark of the Saviour may have been merely proverbial, without any *special* reference to the book of Job. Besides these places, there are a few others in which there seems to be an allusion to Job, though not so manifest as to be regarded as intentional quotations. See James iv. 10, comp. Job xxii. 29; Rom. xi. 34, 35, comp. Job xv. 8; and 1 Pet. v. 6, comp. Job xxii. 29. It is once alluded to by Philo (§ 31), but is not referred to by Josephus. Eichhorn, Einleit. § 645.

But if the canonical authority and inspiration of the book of Job be admitted, still a most interesting question presents itself. In what sense is it to be regarded as of divine origin? Are we to consider the whole of it as inspired? Are all the speeches made, and all the arguments used, and all the complainings uttered by Job, and all the views of science presented, to be regarded as the suggestions of the Holy Spirit? If this is not to be supposed, on what principles are we to be guided in determining what is of divine authority, and what not? And in what sense is the word *inspiration* to be used, as applied to those portions of the book? These questions, which probably occur to every reader of the book, and which create perplexity whenever they occur, make it necessary to offer a few suggestions in regard to its inspiration. The principles which are necessary to be understood in order to a correct interpretation of the book of Job may be stated as follows:—

(1.) In an inspired book there is an exact and infallible record of *facts* as they actually occur. Whether the record relates to the existence, perfections, and plans of God; to what he has done in the work of creation, providence, or redemption, or to his claims on mankind; whether to the existence and employments of angels, or to the creation, character, and destiny of man; and whether to the revolutions of kingdoms, or to the actions, words, feelings, and views of individual men, still the same principle exists in the case. The sole object is to secure a *fair record*; to state things as they are. The design of inspiration is not always to communicate new truth, or truth that was not or could not be otherwise known; it is to make a *record* that shall be free from all error, and shall preserve

the remembrance of things as they actually exist. And so far as pertains to this principle, it is unnecessary to inquire whether inspiration is by immediate suggestion or by superintendence; the only essential thing is, that in an inspired work there is an exact and infallible statement of the truth which is professed to be recorded. As a matter of fact, in the volume of revelation, a large part of the truths are far above any power of man to discover them, and they were directly communicated to the speakers and writers by the Holy Spirit. In regard to all that is recorded in the Scriptures, it is to be held that the Holy Spirit so presided over the minds of the sacred writers, as to keep them from error, and to secure the exact record of such things as were necessary to be known to man.

In applying this principle to the book before us, the only thing which it is necessary to maintain is, that there is a correct *record* of events as they occurred to Job, and of the arguments of himself and his friends, and of the address of the Almighty. Whether either he or his friends were *inspired*, is quite another question, and is to be determined by other considerations. Whether all which *he* said was true, or whether all or anything which *they* advanced was correct, is not to be determined by the mere position that *the book* is inspired.

(2.) It is to be admitted that there are in this book many things recorded which are in themselves wrong and false. It is not to be denied that Job uttered some sentiments which cannot be vindicated, and often manifested a spirit which was wrong. This is apparent, not only from the contrariety of such sentiments and feelings to other parts of the Scriptures, but from the reproof of the Almighty himself at the close of the book. Nor can it be denied that the friends of Job uttered many erroneous sentiments, for their views are expressly condemned by God himself, ch. xlii. 7. Still, it is true that they *uttered* those sentiments, and that they entertained those opinions; and this is properly all that inspiration is responsible for. In the records of profane history, there are often things occurring just of this character. There are many things recorded which were in themselves wrong, yet *the record* is correctly made; there are many sentiments expressed by various speakers which are wrong in spirit, and yet the record that such sentiments were uttered is true. All that the fidelity of the historian is responsible for is the correctness of the record. He is not at all answerable for the propriety of the acts referred to, nor for the sentiments of the various speakers. If he gives a fair statement, he has done all that the world can demand of him as an historian—just as all that a painter can be required to do is to give a fair copy of his original. Whether that original be beautiful or otherwise, is quite another question.

So in the matter before us, all that the inspired writer, whoever he may have been, is fairly responsible for, is the fairness and correctness of his record.

(3.) It is of great importance to preserve the record of things as they actually occurred, whether they were good or evil, right or wrong. This gives its value and importance to history; and this object is not unworthy of inspiration. We wish to know what the facts were; what were the opinions which prevailed; what were the sentiments expressed; what were the views of men on important subjects. Hence history has brought down to us many things that are in themselves of little value, or that cannot be depended on as guides now, but which show what has been the progress of events. So in the book before us, it was of great importance to show the opinions which prevailed in an early age of the world, and with the best opportunities for reflection, on a great and important question of the divine government. It will make us prize more highly the revelation which *we* have on those points; and it will show us how much we are *really* indebted to revelation. The discussion in this book was on one of the most important points that can come before the mind of man. It is on a question which has occurred in all ages, and which has been everywhere examined. The inquiry why the good are afflicted, and why the wicked are prospered, is one that *must* come before the minds of thinking men, and *must* present a great many difficulties. This question is discussed here under every conceivable advantage. It arose from a most interesting and afflicting *case* which had actually occurred. It was examined by men of age, experience, and wisdom; by men who could bring to bear on it the result of patient thought, and who were imbued with the wisdom of the ancients. The subject was never more fairly or fully examined; and nothing ever occurred that could do more to determine the just limits of the human powers on these great inquiries pertaining to the divine government.

(4.) In a book of revelation for the guidance of mankind, it is important not only to preserve the memory of *facts* as they actually occurred, and to impart to men truths which the human mind could not originate, but to preserve, also, *a correct record of the workings of the human mind in circumstances of trial and temptation*. It is important not only *to state* in the abstract, and by clear propositions, what man is, but *to show* what he is by exhibiting him as placed in a great variety of situations, and by permitting us to see how he will feel, and speak, and act in such circumstances. We need to see what human nature is; how it develops itself in trying situations; how the general declarations which God makes about man are illustrated in his life; and especially, we want to see the effect of religion in subduing, calming, and elevating the soul, and



in enabling it to bear trials and to meet with temptations. And for the same purpose, also, it is important to exhibit mind *as it actually exists* under the influence of religion—with the imperfections of our nature—with the impatience, restlessness, murmuring, and unguarded expressions which occur in times of calamity and trial. Even the eminent saint is not perfect in this life. Religion does not deliver him from all imperfection. It leaves the mind subject to conflict, anxiety trouble; engaged in a fearful warfare with sin and temptation; liable to the outbreaks of impatience and murmuring; subject to the possibility of being thrown off the guard, and of saying things which will be subsequently the occasion of much regret. Now, as it is the design of revelation to exhibit religion not only in its precepts, doctrines, and commands, but *as it actually exists in the mind and heart*, it was important to furnish some actual illustrations of this in detail. For this purpose, nothing could be better adapted than to select just such a case as that of Job, and to exhibit him in a condition of most extraordinary trial. He possessed undoubted piety. He had made uncommon attainments in religion. He had been a man of calm judgment—of sober views—of eminent wisdom. His was a fair case, therefore, in which to show the workings of human nature even under the most favorable circumstances, and when the mind is imbued with religion. It was a case designed, not to show what man *ought to be*, but what he *is*; and how much infirmity and passion may actually exist in the soul, even when imbued with the principles of piety. Much of this same thing also occurs in the Book of Psalms; and one of the principal things which give value to that inestimable part of the Scriptures is, that it so fully expresses the feelings of a pious man in a great variety of trying circumstances. Many of the expressions in the Psalms, as well as in the Book of Job, we are by no means to regard as the offspring of genuine religion, but as denoting what human nature is, even when the prevailing feelings are those of piety. Even in such a mind, there will be outbreaks of passion; improper murmuring; doubts about the safe condition of the soul; moments of darkness, when clear visions of the divine goodness will be withdrawn; and expressions of impatience, which will give occasion of regret in the subsequent life. Comp. Ps. cxvi. 11, lxxiii. 1—15. To record these is not to express approbation of them; and the record may be a source of unspeakable consolation to those who are betrayed into similar expressions, as showing that their feelings do not demonstrate that they have no true religion. One of the principal excellencies of the Book of Job is, that it preserves just such a record, and that it shows what the human mind is, even under the prevalent ascendancy of religious feeling, when it is subjected to severe trials.

(5.) In order, then, to ascertain in this book what is right and what is wrong, a careful examination is necessary, in connexion with the other parts of the Bible. The views of the friends of Job, and the expressions of Job himself, must be carefully compared with the law of God, with the counsels and precepts elsewhere revealed, and with the nature of true religion as elsewhere exhibited. We are not to assume that all that Job said was right; nor are we to assume that *we* would have avoided the impatience and irreverence which he sometimes manifested. We are to compare the arguments of Job and his friends with the statements of truth elsewhere occurring in the Scriptures, and to place his feelings by the side of those of the only perfect man—the Lord Jesus. In him there was no impatience—no murmuring—no irreverence. In him was illustrated fully what religion, under the most trying circumstances, *ought* to be; in Job we see what, as human nature is constituted, it often *is*. With the New Testament in our hand, it is not difficult to form a correct estimate of what was wrong in the Patriarch of Uz; and we shall not find it difficult to determine what we ought to avoid when we are called to pass through similar trials.

(6.) It is not difficult, then, to determine the value of this book, or the place which it deserves to occupy in the sacred canon. It shows the following things:—(a) The operations of the human heart when under trial. (b) The real power of religion in restraining the mind, and in producing ultimately acquiescence in God. (c) It shows how far the human mind can go of itself, under the most favourable circumstances, in explaining the mysteries of the divine government. (d) It shows the necessity that truth should be *revealed* beyond what the human understanding has power itself to originate, to furnish support and consolation. (e) It shows the duty of perfect submission to the will of God, even when we cannot see the reason of his doings. In the works of creation and providence he has evinced so much wisdom and power, so much that surpasses even now all that science can do to explain it, so much that is every way superior to man, that we ought to have confidence in the wisdom of God *in all things*, and to believe that the great Governor of the universe is qualified for universal empire.

Various places have been assigned to the Book of Job in the ancient and modern arrangements. The place which it occupied at first in the Jewish canon is uncertain, for the ancient catalogues of the sacred books differ much from each other in regard to the place of this book. In that of Melito, it stands after the Canticles; in that of Origen, after Ezekiel; in that of Jerome, after the minor prophets. In Bava Bathra, c. L. f. 14, b., the books of the Ha-

giographa follow each other in the following order: 1 Ruth, 2 Psalms, 3 Job, 4 the writings of Solomon, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, 5 Lamentations, &c. According to Elias Levita, the Masorites arranged the Hagiographa in the following order: 1 Chronicles, 2 Psalms, 3 Job, 4 Proverbs, 5 the five festival books. The order in the printed editions varies as much as in the catalogues. In the Bomberg edition, in 1521, it is placed between the book of Proverbs and Daniel; in the edition of Buxtorf, it is placed between Proverbs and Canticles. See Eichhorn, Einleit. § 645, Carpzov, Introd. in V. T. p. 31. The proper place for the book of Job, in order to estimate its real value and importance, is at the commencement of the Bible, or in the early part of the book of Genesis. There is reason to suppose that it is the oldest book in the world; and there is a moral certainty that it was penned before the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, and before, in fact, any of the revelations were given which now shed so much light on the path of man. In our estimation of its design, it should stand at the commencement of the volume of revealed truth, to show how little the human mind can discover in regard to the principles of the divine government, and the necessity of revelation. The reasonings of the sages of Arabia, in the earliest period of the world, demonstrated abundantly what the reasonings of the sages of Greece afterwards did—that man needed a revelation to acquaint him with the true principles of the divine administration.

## VII.

### *The patriarchal religion, as developed in the book of Job.*

On the supposition that this book was composed at the time supposed, then it is an invaluable document in regard to the nature of the patriarchal religion. We have comparatively few notices on that subject in the book of Genesis, and this volume supplies a chasm which it is of the greatest importance to fill up in order to understand the history of the world. We may suppose, without impropriety, that the mind of Job was imbued with the principles of religion, as then understood by the patriarchs; that he was acquainted with the traditions which had come down from more remote periods; that he was apprized of the revelations which had then been communicated to mankind; and that he practised the rites of religion which were then prevalent among the true worshippers of God. If this is so, then it will be of interest and importance to bring together, in a brief compass, some of the notices of the patriarchal religion scattered throughout this book.

(1.) The existence of one supreme God, the infinitely wise and

glorious Creator of all things. In the entire book, God is spoken of as *one*, nor is there an intimation by any of the speakers that there is more than one God. There are no allusions to a *good* and an *evil* principle contending in the universe; nor any trace of the doctrine which subsequently became prevalent in the East, that such contending principles existed. No sentiments occur like those which were afterwards embodied in Persia respecting the existence and conflicts of Ormuzd and Ahriman (see Creuzer, *Symbolik und Mythologie*, Erster Band, 226, seq., and Neander, *Geschichte*, 2, a. 219, seq.), or what became subsequently the doctrine of the Manichæans. The religion of the book of Job is throughout a pure *theism*. This fact is remarkable, because the subject of the controversy—the mingled good and evil in the world—was such as constituted the foundation of the argument for *dualism* subsequently held in a considerable portion of the Oriental world.

The characteristics ascribed to God in this book are such as are everywhere attributed to him in the Bible, and are far above any conceptions which prevailed of him at any time among Pagan philosophers. He is *almighty*, chaps. v. 9; vi. 4; ix. 5—12, *et al.* He is *omniscient*, chaps. xi. 11; xxi. 22. He is *wise*, chaps. xii. 13; xxiv. 1; *inscrutable*, chaps. xi. 7—9; xxxvi. 26; *invisible*, ch. xi. 11. He is *the Supreme Governor of the world, and the regulator of its concerns*, chaps. v. 9—13; viii. 4—6. He is *the Creator of all things*, chaps. iv. 17; x. 8—11; xxxv. 10; xxxviii. 4—10. He is *perfectly pure and holy*, chaps. xv. 15, 16; xxv. 5, 6. He is *eternal*, ch. x. 5. He is *a spiritual Being*, ch. x. 4. He is *gracious*, and *is ready to forgive sin to the penitent*, chaps. v. 17—27; xi. 13—19; xxii. 21—23; xxxiii. 23—28. He is *a hearer of prayer*, chaps. xxxiii. 26; xii. 4; xxii. 27. He is *the dispenser of life and death*, chaps. iv. 9; x. 12; xxxiii. 4. He *communicates his will by revelation to mankind*, chaps. iv. 12—17; xxxiii. 14—17. In these and in numerous other passages in the book, the existence and attributes of the One Supreme God are stated with perhaps as much clearness as in any part of the Bible, and in a manner infinitely superior to any statements respecting the divine character and perfections in any other ancient books except those of the Scriptures.

(2.) The universe was created by this one great and glorious God. It was not the work of chance; it was not the creation of any inferior beings; it was not eternal. A single passage is all that is necessary to be referred to on this point—a passage of unequalled sublimity, ch. xxxviii. 4—11.

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?  
Declare, if thou hast understanding.

Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest?  
 Or who hath stretched the line upon it?  
 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened?  
 Or who laid the corner-stone thereof,  
 When the morning stars sang together,  
 And all the sons of God shouted for joy?  
 Or who shut up the sea with doors,  
 When it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb?  
 When I made the cloud the garment thereof,  
 And thick darkness a swaddling-band for it,  
 And brake it up for my decreed place,  
 And set bars and doors,  
 And said, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further;  
 And here shall thy proud waves be stayed?"

(3.) He is the moral Governor of all his intelligent creatures, dispensing rewards and punishments according to their character. It is unnecessary to refer to particular passages demonstrating this, as the whole of the controversy of the book turns on it. The *fact* that God thus governs the universe, and that he punishes the evil and rewards the good, is assumed on both sides in the controversy, and is never called in question. The point of inquiry is, In what manner is it done? One of the parties maintains that the dispensations of God here are strictly according to human character, and that character may be fairly inferred from those dispensations; the other denies this, but maintains that there will be a *future* retribution, which will be strictly in accordance with justice. Comp. Notes on ch. xix. 23—27. *Somewhere*, and *somehow*, it seems to have been held by all parties, God would show himself the friend of the righteous and the punisher of the wicked.

(4.) The existence of *angels*, or a superior rank of holy intelligences is asserted. In ch. i. 6, it cannot be denied that by "the sons of God" who came to present themselves before God, holy beings superior to men are denoted, and that it is designed to represent this scene as occurring in heaven. It is further implied there, that they came together from an important service, *as if* they had been absent engaged in some ministry to other parts of the universe, and returned now to render an account, and to receive a fresh commission in their work. The term "son of God" is used in Daniel iii. 25, comp. 28, to denote an angel. Angels also are, undoubtedly, referred to in ch. xv. 15:

Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints;  
 Yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.

The express mention of "the heavens" in the parallelism, as well as the contrast between "the saints," or holy ones, here referred to, and with *man* (vs. 14, 16), proves that the "holy ones" are angels. It is possible also that in a parallel expression in ch. xxv. 5, there may be a reference to angels:

Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not;  
Yea, the stars are not pure in his sight.

The declaration in ch. xv. 15, demonstrates that the received opinion then was that the angels were far inferior to God. They are spoken of as holy beings; as superior to men; as eminently holy in comparison with the most holy men, but still as so far inferior to God that they were comparatively impure.

In ch. v. 1, also, there is probably an allusion to angels:

Call now, if there be any to answer thee;  
And to which of the saints wilt thou turn?

And in ch. xxxviii. 7, they are mentioned as having been present at the creation of the earth, and as celebrating that great event with a song of praise:

When the morning stars sang together,  
And all the sons of God shouted for joy.

If the book of Job was composed in the time which I have supposed, as stated in the previous parts of this Introduction, then these are among the earliest notices of the heavenly hierarchy that we have in the sacred volume. They imply that the existence of superior intelligences was an undisputed fact that might be used for the sake of argument and illustration; that they were eminently holy, though far inferior to God; that they performed important offices in the administration of the universe, and that they were under the control of the Almighty, and assembled together before him from time to time to give their account, and to receive afresh his commands. Early notices of the existence of angelic beings may be found also in Gen. xix. 1, 15; xxii. 11; xxiv. 7, 40; xxviii. 12; xlviii. 16. Ex. xxiii. 20. Judges xiii. 19. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16, *et al.*

It would be impossible now to trace the origin of the belief in the existence of superior ranks of holy intelligences, and it would be inappropriate here to attempt to follow out the *development* of the idea as it occurs in the Scriptures, or as it is found in the early views of the Orientals. The belief, however, has always pervaded the Oriental world, of a series of ascending orders of intelligences, employed for various purposes in the administration of the affairs of the universe. See Creuzer, Sym. u. Myth., and Neander, as quoted above. "The ancient Persians," says Mr. Sale, Pre. Dis. to the Koran, sect. iv., "firmly believed the ministry of angels, and their superintendence over the affairs of the world, (as the Magians still do,) and therefore assign them distinct charges and provinces, giving their names to the months and the days of the month." The Mohammedans probably derived their views on this subject

from the Old Testament, intermingled with the fables of the Jews; but it is an interesting fact that in the country of Mohammed, in the days of Job, the doctrine of the existence of a superior order of intelligences was held in its purity, and without any of the intermixtures of puerility with which the doctrine is intermingled in the Jewish traditions, and in the Koran.—See Sale; Pre. Dis., sect. iv.

(5.) The doctrine of the existence of evil spirits was believed with as much certainty. The introduction of the character of Satan, ch. i. 11, is conclusive proof on that point. He is a dark, malignant, accusing spirit; one who lives to spy out the conduct of others; who is suspicious of the sincerity of all virtue; who delights in the opportunity of putting virtue to the severest test, with a view to show that it is false and hollow; who delights to give pain. Satan is introduced in ch. i. 11, as if it were generally admitted that there were such evil spirits, and as if their character was so well understood that it was unnecessary to offer a remark on the subject. The book of Job, however, furnishes no information as to the prevalent belief whether those spirits were originally evil, or whether they had apostatized from a former state of holiness and happiness. The character of Satan, however, in the book of Job, is such as to render it in the highest degree probable that it was a matter of tradition that *he* had been the agent in the temptation of Adam, and in the introduction of sin into the world. There is a strong resemblance between the feelings with which he looked on Job, and those with which he must have regarded man in Paradise; and the general distrust which he is represented as having in the piety of Job, and the conviction which he expresses that if the proper test were applied it would be found to be insincere, is such as we might expect from one emboldened by the successful attempt to alienate man as he was created, from his Creator. There is, indeed, a slight intimation in the poem itself, that Satan was a fallen spirit that had been once holy and happy. It is found in the expression of the belief of Eliphaz in two places, that entire confidence could not be put even in the holy angels—as if there had been some revolt or apostacy among them, which rendered it possible that there might be more:

Behold, he put no trust in his servants,  
And his angels he charged with folly.  
How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay,  
Whose foundation is in the dust? ch. iv. 18, 19.

And again:

Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints;  
Yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight. ch. xv. 15.

Comp. ch. xxv. 5. Language like this would hardly be employed

unless there was a belief that even the holiness of the angels was not incorruptible, and that there had been some revolt there among a part, which rendered it *possible* that others might revolt also. Comp. Jude 6, "And the angels which kept not their first estate." These passages taken together lead to a clear intimation of a belief that there had been a defection among the heavenly hosts, which was of such a character as to make it *possible* that they who remained there might apostatize also. They are not represented, indeed, as *sinful*, (see the Notes on those passages;) they have a degree of holiness which nothing human can equal; but still it is not of the same character as that of God; it is not so exalted as to put it above the suspicion that it *might* fall.

(6.) Man, in the time of Job, was regarded as a fallen being, and as wholly depraved. Of the belief that man is fallen, the following passages are full proof:

Shall mortal man be more just than God?  
 Shall a man be more pure than his Maker?  
 Behold, he put no trust in his servants,  
 And his angels he charged with folly.  
 How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay,  
 Whose foundation is in the dust. ch. iv. 17—19.

Man that is born of a woman, is of few days,  
 And full of trouble.  
 Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?  
 Not one. ch. xiv. 1, 4.

What is man, that he should be clean?  
 And he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?  
 Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints;  
 Yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight;  
 How much more abominable and filthy is man,  
 Who drinketh iniquity like water! ch. xv. 14—16.

There is also an allusion to the manner in which this depravity was introduced into the world:

If I covered my transgressions as Adam,  
 By hiding mine iniquity in my bosom. ch. xxxi. 33.

In ch. i. 21 there seems also to be a reference to the sentence pronounced on man in consequence of the apostacy, and in ch. x. 9 it is possible that there may be the same allusion. As the language there used, however, is such as is common in all languages, and such as may be suggested by mere observation, it is not conclusively certain that the reference is to the sentence pronounced on man on account of his sin.

(7.) The necessity of reconciliation with God, in order that peace may be enjoyed, is abundantly stated and enforced:



Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace ;  
 Thereby good shall come unto thee.  
 Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth,  
 And lay up his words in thine heart. ch. xxii. 21, 22.

Comp. ch. iv. 17—27, xi. 13—19.

(8.) The doctrine is taught that if man was penitent under the divine chastisement, God would receive the true penitent to his favor. See the passages quoted above (7), and the following:

If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up,  
 Thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles. ch. xxii. 23.

If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter,  
 One among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness,  
 Then he is gracious unto him, and saith,  
     Deliver him from going down to the pit ;  
     I have found a ransom.

His flesh shall be fresher than a child's ;  
 He shall return to the days of his youth ;  
 He shall pray unto God, and he will be favorable unto him ;  
 And he shall see his face with joy ;  
 For he will render unto man his righteousness.  
 He looketh upon men ; and if any say, I have sinned,  
 And perverted that which was right, and it profited me not,  
 He will deliver his soul from going unto the pit,  
 And his life shall see the light. ch. xxxiii. 23—28.

(9.) The doctrine was held that man would not live again on the earth; that when he died, he departed to return no more. See this opinion presented with great beauty and force in ch. xiv.

(10.) A very important inquiry next meets us in reference to the question whether man would live after death; and if he did, what would be his condition then. This inquiry is of special importance, if, as has been supposed, this is the oldest book in the world. It will thus throw important light on the development of the idea of the future state, and the belief of the early ages on that point. On this important subject, the following remarks will probably comprise all the views presented in the book of Job.

(a) There is no distinct and formal statement of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Indeed, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to make out from this book that there were any settled views on that subject then prevailing.

(b) There is no mention made of heaven, as a place of rest, or as an abode of holiness. The angels are referred to, and God is often mentioned, and there is, as we shall see, a reference to a future state of being; but there is no distinct declaration of heaven, as a place where the righteous would dwell together for ever.

(c) There is no belief expressed of the resurrection. The only passage which can, by any persons, be regarded as teaching this doctrine is the celebrated passage, ch. xix. 25—27. But that this

does not refer to the resurrection of the body, seems to me to be clear, for the reasons which are suggested in the Notes on that passage. The remarks also on ch. xiv. seem to be conclusive proof that Job did not suppose that the body would be raised up again after it had once been laid in the dust.

For there is hope of a tree,  
If it be cut down, that it will sprout again,  
And that the tender branch thereof will not cease  
Though the root thereof wax old in the earth,  
And the stock thereof die in the ground;  
Yet through the scent of water it will bud,  
And bring forth boughs like a plant.  
But man dieth and wasteth away;  
Yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? vers. 7.—10

The same disbelief of the doctrine of the resurrection, or ignorance of it, appears from the following passages:

As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away;  
So he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.  
He shall return no more to his house,  
Neither shall his place know him any more. ch. vii. 9—10.

As the waters fail from the sea,  
And the flood decayeth and drieth up,  
So man lieth down and riseth not;  
Till the heavens be no more they shall not awake,  
Nor be raised out of their sleep. ch. xiv. 11, 12

If a man die, shall he live again? ver. 14.

It may be said that these passages only teach that man would not appear again *on the earth*; that he would not rise as the tree sprouts up and lives again. This may be so; but still, if they had known of the resurrection at all, these sentiments would not have been uttered. *That* doctrine would have relieved all the difficulty as effectually as the belief that man would be raised up to dwell on the earth would have done.

(d) The doctrine of future retribution is not brought forward as it would have been, if it was clearly understood. The reference to a future state of rewards and punishments would have removed all the embarrassment which was felt by Job and his friends. It would have explained the mysterious events in the unequal distribution of rewards and punishments in this life; relieved the difficulty arising from the fact that the righteous suffer and the wicked are prospered here; and would have kept Job from murmuring and complaining under his severe trials. And though there is an occasional allusion to a future state, yet it is by no means such as would be made now in arguing on the difficulties which perplexed the minds of Job and his friends.

(e) Yet still, there *was* a belief that man would live after death, or that the grave would not be the end of existence. It is remarkable that the only passages which refer to the subject, or express the belief at all, occur in the speeches of Job; and the manner in which he brings forward the doctrine seems to have made no impression on the minds of the other speakers. Even the reference to the future state by Job himself does not appear to have been designed to turn aside the force of their arguments. The views which he presented on the subject do not seem to have excited any curiosity in their minds, or to have been regarded as of sufficient importance to demand a reply. The views which were entertained by Job on the subject are the following:

1. The grave was a quiet resting-place; a place where toil, and woe, and care would cease.

For now should I have lain still and been quiet;  
I should have slept;  
Then had I been at rest  
With kings and counsellors of the earth.  
Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been;  
As infants which never saw the light.  
There the wicked cease from troubling,  
And there the weary be at rest. ch. iii.

My days are passed;  
My plans are at an end—  
The cherished purposes of my heart.  
Night has become day to me;  
The light bordereth on darkness.  
Truly, I look to Sheol as my home;  
My bed I spread in the place of darkness.  
To corruption I say, "Thou art my father;"  
To the worm, "My mother and my sister."  
And where now is my hope?  
And who will see my hope fulfilled?  
To the bars of Sheol they must descend;  
Yea, we shall descend together to the dust. ch. xvii. 11—16.

For the numbered years pass away;  
And I am going the way whence I shall not return.  
My spirit is exhausted;  
My days are at an end;  
The grave waits for me. ch. xvi. 22; xvii. 1.

And surely the mountain falling comes to nought;  
And the rock is removed from his place;  
The waters wear away the stones,  
The floods wash away the dust of the earth,  
And the hope of man thou dost destroy.  
Thou dost overpower him for ever, and he passes off;  
Thou dost change his countenance, and sendest him away.  
His sons are honored, but he knoweth it not;  
Or they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not. ch. xiv. 18—21.

2. But though the grave is thus the termination of man's earthly hopes, yet it is not the end of man. There is an abode to which the grave is but the entrance; a world where there is still consciousness, and susceptibility of happiness or woe. In that world, the Shades or the *Rephaim* reside—the spirits of departed men:

The shades tremble from beneath;  
The waters and their inhabitants.  
Sheol is naked before him;  
And Destruction hath no covering. ch. xxvi. 6.

It is clear here that that world is supposed to be "beneath;" that it is under the waters; that it is the region of "Sheol" to which the grave is the entrance; and that there is a dominion of God over those departed Shades or *Rephaim*, so that he has power to make them tremble. There can be no doubt that by the Shades or *Rephaim* here, there is allusion to the *Manes Mortuum*, the spirits of the dead confined in Sheol. Comp. Isa. xiv. 9; Prov. ii. 18; Ps. lxxxviii. 10; Prov. ix. 18; Isa. xxvi. 19. That world is dark and dismal. There is an obscure light there, but it serves only to heighten the gloom:

Are not my days few?  
O spare me, and let me alone, that I may take a little ease,  
Before I go whence I shall not return,  
To the land of darkness, and the shadow of death—  
The land of darkness, like the blackness of the shadow of death,  
Where there is no order, and where its shining is like blackness.  
ch. x. 20—22.

For the bearing of this passage on the belief of the future state, the reader is referred to the Notes. This view of the future world is remarkably obscure and gloomy, and shows that even the mind of Job had not such anticipations of the future state as to cheer and support him in the time of trial. The apprehension seems to have been that all the dead would descend through the grave to a region where only a few scattered rays of light would exist, and where the whole aspect of the dwelling was in strong contrast with the cheerful regions of the "land of the living." To that dark world even Job felt that it would be a calamity to descend, for though there was an expectation that there would be a distinction there between the good and the evil, yet compared with the present world of light and beauty, it was a sad and gloomy dwelling-place.

3. That world was regarded by the ancients as less desirable as a place of residence than this in several respects. It was dark and gloomy. It was entered through the grave, and the grave was only its outer court. They who dwelt there were cut off from the enjoyments of the present life. It was a land of silence. Thus

Hezekiah, speaking of that world to which he had a prospect of descending when so sick, says:

I said, "I shall not see JEHOVAH;  
JEHOVAH in the land of the living;  
I shall see man no more,  
Among the inhabitants of the land of stillness." Isa. xxxviii. 11.

In like manner, it would be a place where the worship of God could not be appropriately celebrated. Thus Hezekiah says:

For Sheol cannot praise thee;  
Death cannot celebrate thee;  
They that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.  
The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day;  
The father to the children shall make known thy faithfulness.  
Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19.

A similar sentiment is expressed by David, Ps. vi. 5:

For in death there is no remembrance of thee;  
In the grave who shall give thee thanks?

A similar view of that world appears to have been taken by Job. Indeed, it is not improbable that the view of Job was even more gloomy in regard to that future world, as he lived at a period so much earlier than David and Hezekiah. Successive revelations imparted new light, and the idea of the future state was more and more developed, though in the time of Hezekiah it was accompanied with much that was dark and gloomy. It was reserved for the gospel fully to "bring life and immortality to light." Yet,

4. In that future world there was some belief that there would be a separation between the good and the bad; or that the wicked would be visited with *punishment*—though the belief of this is represented as received from travellers, the faith of foreign lands:

Have ye not inquired of the travellers?  
And will you not admit their testimony?  
That the wicked man is kept for the day of destruction?  
And that he shall be brought forth in the day of fierce wrath?  
ch. xxi. 30.

That this "wrath" refers to punishment which the wicked will experience after death, is apparent from what Job immediately adds, that he well knows that his present life may be one of prosperity, and that he may lie down with honor in the grave, and that the clods of the valley will be sweet unto him:

Who charges him with his way to his face?  
And who recompenses to him that which he hath done?  
And he shall be borne [with honor] to the grave,  
And [friends] shall watch tenderly over his tomb.  
Sweet to him shall be the clods of the valley;  
Every man shall go out to honor him,  
And of those before him there shall be no number. ch. xxi. 31—33.

Comp. Notes on Isa. xiv. 15—19. It will be apparent from these illustrations, that the views of the future state in the time of Job were very obscure, and this is the reason of the remarkable fact that no particular reference is made in the argument to it, in order to remove the difficulties that were felt in regard to the divine administration here.

(11.) God was to be worshipped by sacrifice and burnt-offerings. It was in this way that Job sought to make expiation for the sins which his children might inadvertently have committed (ch. i. 5, 6), and that the sins of his friends were to be expiated (ch. xlii. 8). This was evidently among the earliest modes of worship (comp. Gen. iv. 4, viii. 20, 21), and there was, therefore, some idea of the nature of an atonement, or of expiation for sin. I do not see any reason to doubt that Job, in common with all the patriarchs, may have had some conception that these bloody offerings were designed to point to the one great Sacrifice that was to be made for the sins of the world; but there is no intimation of any such belief in the book itself. Of the modes of worship, besides the offering of sacrifice, nothing can be learned from this book, except that sacrifices were to be accompanied with prayer, and that prayer was acceptable to God, and would be heard; ch. xlii. 8, xxxiii. 26, 27, 28, xi. 13—15. Repentance was also demanded, and where there was a penitent heart, the offender would be accepted.

If thou prepare thine heart,  
And stretch out thine hands towards him;  
If the iniquity which is in thine hands thou wilt put far away,  
And wilt not suffer evil to dwell in thy habitation,  
Then shalt thou lift up thy countenance [bright] without spot,  
And thou shalt be firm, and shalt not fear,  
And thy life shall be bright above the noonday.  
—Now thou art in darkness—but thou shalt be as the morning.

ch. xi. 13—17.

The religion of the time of Job was a pure theism. It consisted in the worship of one God, with appropriate sacrifices, and with acts of confidence and adoration, and with dependence on his mercy to lost sinners. There is, indeed, no express mention of convocations for public worship, nor of the Sabbath, nor of the office of priest. As in the time of Noah (Gen. viii.) the father of a family was the officiating priest who laid the victim on the altar, so it was in the time of Job, ch. i. 4, 5. In these services there was the most profound veneration for the one God, and the deepest abhorrence of idolatry in all its forms.

If I have made gold my trust,  
Or said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence;  
If I rejoiced because my wealth was great,  
And because mine hand had found much;

If I beheld the sun where it shined,  
 And the moon advancing in its brightness,  
 And my heart has been secretly enticed,  
 And my mouth has kissed my hand;  
 This also were a crime to be punished by the judge,  
 For I should have denied the God who is above. ch. xxxi. 24—28.

There is nowhere in the book an intimation that the son, the moon, the stars, or any created being, was to be honored as God.

(12.) We have in the book of Job an interesting view of the nature and effects of true piety. The necessity of holiness of life, of trust in God, of integrity and truth, is everywhere insisted on as essential to true religion. To transcribe the particular places where these are dwelt upon, would be to copy a considerable part of the book. We may just advert to the beautiful manner in which the necessity of *sincerity* in the service of God is urged, and in which the sin and danger of *hypocrisy* are expressed:

Can the paper reed grow up without mire?  
 Can the bulrush grow up without water?  
 Even yet in its greenness, and uncut,  
 It withereth before any other herb.  
 Such are the ways of all who forget God;  
 So perishes the hope of the hypocrite.  
 His hope shall rot,  
 And his trust shall be the building of the spider.  
 He shall lean upon the building, and it shall not stand;  
 He shall grasp it, but it shall not endure. ch. viii. 11—15

Knowest thou not that from the most ancient times,  
 From the time when man was placed upon the earth,  
 That the triumphing of the wicked is short,  
 And the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment?  
 Though his greatness mount up to the heavens,  
 And his excellency unto the clouds,  
 Yet he shall perish for ever as the vilest substance.  
 They who have seen him shall say, Where is he?  
 He shall flee away as a dream, and not be found,  
 Yea, he shall vanish as a vision of the night. ch. xx. 4—8.

For what is the hope of the hypocrite when [God] cuts him off;  
 When he taketh away his life?  
 Will God listen to his cry  
 When trouble cometh upon him?  
 Will he delight himself in the Almighty?  
 Will he call at all times upon God? ch. xxvii. 8—10.

(13.) An interesting view of the religion of the time of Job is seen in its influence on morals and manners. Customs in the Oriental world change little, and in Arabia at the present time we have still interesting illustrations of what existed in the days of Job. In the patriarchal times all this was identified with their religion, and there is scarcely even now to be found anywhere more beautiful illustrations of the nature and effects of religion in these respects,

than occur in the book of Job, and nowhere are there more happy descriptions of the simplicity, the purity, the urbanity of early manners and customs. This is seen in the book of Job in the following respects:

(a) In the perfect respectfulness of manner in their treatment of each other. In all the long controversy recorded in this book, and in all that was said that was harsh and adapted to irritate, there is no *interruption* of the speaker. There is no passionate outbreak. It was a conceded and well understood matter that the speaker was to be heard patiently through, and then that the reply was to be heard *as* patiently. No matter how much misapprehension of the meaning of the one who had spoken there might be, no matter what reflection there might be on his motives or character, and no matter how severe and withering the sarcasm, yet there is no attempt to break in upon the speaker. This is understood still to be courtesy in the Oriental world; this was regarded as courtesy among the aborigines of this country; and in this respect the more civilized and polished people of our times might learn something from even the wandering Arab, or the "wild untutored Indian." Thus Dr. Franklin (Works, vol. ii. 455), speaking of the "savages of North America," says, "Having frequent occasions to hold public councils, they have acquired great order and decency in conducting them. The old men sit in the foremost ranks, the warriors in the next, and the women and children in the hindmost. The business of the women is to take exact notice of what passes, imprint it on their memories, and communicate it to their children. He that would speak, rises. The rest observe a profound silence. When he has finished, and sits down, they leave him five or six minutes to recollect, that if he has omitted anything he intended to say, or has anything to add, he may rise again and deliver it. To interrupt another, even in common conversation, is reckoned highly indecent. How different this is from the conduct of a polite British House of Commons, where scarce a day passes without some confusion, that makes the Speaker hoarse in calling *to order*," &c. "It is one of the Indian rules of politeness not to answer a public proposition the same day that it is made; they think it would be treating it as a light matter, and that they show it respect by taking time to consider it, as of a matter important." Ibid. p. 454.

(b) Respect for age. More beautiful instances of this can nowhere be found than in the modesty of Elihu, and in the deference which Job said was paid to him in his days of prosperity. Elihu says:

I am young, and ye are very old;  
Therefore I was afraid,  
And durst not make known to you mine opinion.



I said, Days should speak,  
 And multitude of years should teach wisdom.  
 But there is a spirit in man :  
 And the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding.  
 Great men are not always wise :  
 Neither do the aged always understand what is right.  
 Therefore I said, Hearken unto me ;  
 I also will declare mine opinion.  
 Behold, I waited for your words,  
 I listened to your arguments,  
 While ye searched out what to say.  
 Yea, I attended to you ;  
 And behold, there is no one that hath refuted Job,  
 Or answered his words.  
 They were confounded ; they answered no more ;  
 They put words far from them.  
 And I waited, although they did not speak ;  
 Although they stood still and answered no more.  
 Now will I answer on my part ;  
 Even I will show mine opinion. ch. xxxii. 6—17.

So Job speaks of the respect that was shown him in the days of his prosperity:

When I went forth to the gate through the city,  
 And prepared my seat in the public place,  
 The young men saw me, and respectfully retired before me ;  
 The aged arose, and stood.  
 The princes refrained from speaking,  
 And laid their hand upon their mouth.  
 The voice of counsellors was silent,  
 And their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.  
 For the ear heard, and it blessed me ;  
 And the eye saw, and it bore witness to me. ch. xxix. 7—11.

(c) One of the virtues then much dwelt on, as an act of piety, was that of hospitality. This is frequently alluded to with great beauty in the poem, as it is in all the poetry of Arabia now, and in the days of Job was esteemed to be a virtue as essential as it is now in the East.

If I have withheld the poor from their desire,  
 Or caused the eyes of the widow to fail ;  
 If I have eaten my morsel alone,  
 And the fatherless hath not eaten of it ;  
 —For from my youth he grew up with me as with a father,  
 And I was her guide from my earliest days—  
 If I have seen any one perish for want of clothing,  
 Or any poor man without covering ;  
 If his loins have not blessed me,  
 And if he have not been warmed with the fleece of my sheep ;  
 Then may my shoulder fall from the blade,  
 And mine arm be broken from the upper bone. ch. xxxi. —1622.

If my domestics could not at all times say, [table,"  
 "Let them show one who has not been satisfied from his hospitable

(The stranger did not lodge in the street,  
 My doors I opened to the traveller,)  
 Then let me be confounded before a great multitude!  
 Let the contempt of families crush me! ch. xxxi. 31—34.

See also ch. xviii. 5, 6, xxi. 17, and the Notes on those places.

(d) In like manner, piety then consisted much in kindness to the poor, the widow, and the fatherless, and to those in the humbler ranks of life. Job's beautiful description of his own piety in the days of his prosperity is all that is needful to illustrate this:

For I rescued the poor when they cried,  
 And the fatherless, when there was none to help him.  
 The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me;  
 And I caused the heart of the widow to sing for joy. ch. xxix. 12, 13.

I was eyes to the blind,  
 And feet was I to the lame.  
 I was a father to the poor,  
 And the cause of the unknown I searched out.  
 And I broke the teeth of the wicked,  
 And from their teeth I plucked away the spoil. ch. xxix. 15—17.

Did not I weep for him that was in trouble?  
 Was not my soul grieved for the poor? ch. xxx. 25.

If I have refused justice to my man-servant or maid-servant<sup>+</sup>  
 When they had a cause with me,  
 What shall I do when God riseth up?  
 When he visiteth, what shall I answer him?  
 Did not he that made me in the womb make him?  
 Did not the same One fashion us in the womb? ch. xxxi. 13—15.

If my land cry out against me,  
 And the furrows likewise complain;  
 If I have eaten its fruits without payment,  
 And extorted the living of its owners;  
 Let thistles grow up instead of wheat,  
 And noxious weeds instead of barley. ch. xxxi. 38—40.

## VIII.

### § *The state of the arts and sciences in the time of Job.*

There is one important aspect still in which the book of Job may be contemplated. It is as an illustration of the state of the arts and sciences of the period of the world when it was composed. We are not, indeed, in a poem of this nature, to look for formal treatises on any of the arts or sciences as then understood, but all that we can expect to find must be incidental allusions, or *hints*, that may enable us to determine with some degree of accuracy what advances society had then made. Such allusions are also of much more value in determining the progress of society, than extended descrip-

tions of conquests and sieges would be. The latter merely change the boundaries of empire; the former indicate *progress* in the condition of man. Inventions in the arts and discoveries in science are *fixed points*, from which society does not go backward. I propose, then, as an illustration of the progress which society had made in the time of Job, as well as to prepare the mind to read the book in the most intelligent manner, to bring together the scattered notices of the state of the arts and sciences contained in this poem. No exact *order* can be observed in this; nor is there anything in the poem to indicate which of the things specified had the priority in point of time, or when the invention or discovery was made. The order of the arrangement chosen will have some reference to the importance of the subjects, and also some to what may be supposed to have first attracted attention. For a more full view of the various points that will be referred to, reference may be made to the *Notes* on the various passages adduced.

## 1. ASTRONOMY

The stars were early observed in Chaldea, where the science of astronomy had its origin. A pastoral people always have some knowledge of the heavenly bodies. The tending of flocks by night, under a clear Oriental sky, gave abundant opportunity for observing the motions of the heavenly bodies, and names would soon be given to the most important of the stars; the difference between the planets and the fixed stars would be observed, and the imagination would be employed in grouping the stars into fanciful resemblances to animals and other objects. In like manner, as caravans travelled much at night through the deserts, on account of the comparative coolness then, they would have an opportunity of observing the stars; and some knowledge of the heavenly bodies became necessary to guide their way. The notices of the heavenly bodies in this poem show chiefly that *names* were given to some of the stars; that they were grouped together in constellations; and that the times of the appearance of certain stars had been carefully observed, and their relation to certain aspects of the weather had been marked. There is no express mention of the planets as distinguished from the fixed stars; and nothing to lead us to suppose that they were acquainted with the true system of astronomy.

He commandeth the sun, and it riseth not;  
 And he sealeth up the stars.  
 He alone stretcheth out the heavens,  
 And walketh upon the high waves of the sea.  
 He maketh Arcturus, Orion,  
 The Pleiades, and the secret chambers of the south. ch. ix. 7—9.

Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?  
 Or loose the bands of Orion?  
 Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season?  
 Or lead forth the Bear with her young?  
 Knowest thou the laws of the heavens?  
 Or hast thou appointed their dominion over the earth?

ch. xxxviii. 31—33.

It would seem, from these passages, that the allusion to the clusters of stars here, is made to them as the harbingers of certain *seasons*. "It is well known, that in different regions of the earth, the appearance of certain constellations before sunrise or after sunset, marks the distinction of seasons, and regulates the labors of the husbandman."—*Wemyss*. It is also known that the appearance of certain constellations—as Orion—was regarded by mariners as denoting a stormy and tempestuous season of the year. See the Notes on the passages quoted above. This seems to be the knowledge of the constellations referred to here, and there is no certain evidence that the observation of the heavens in the time of Job had gone beyond this.

A somewhat curious use has been made of the reference to the stars in the book of Job, by an attempt to determine the time when he lived. Supposing the principal stars here mentioned to be those of Taurus and Scorpio, and that these were the cardinal constellations of spring and autumn in the time of Job, and calculating their positions by the precession of the equinoxes, the time referred to in the book of Job was found to be 818 years after the deluge, or 184 years before the birth of Abraham. "This calculation, made by Dr. Brinkley of Dublin, and adopted by Dr. Hales, had been made also in 1765 by M. Ducontant in Paris, with a result differing only in being forty-two years less." The coincidence is remarkable, but the proof that the constellations referred to are Taurus and Scorpio, is too uncertain to give much weight to the argument.

## 2. COSMOLOGY.

The intimations about the structure, the size, and the support of the earth, are also very obscure, and the views entertained would seem to have been very confused. Language is used, doubtless, such as would express the popular belief, and it resembles that which is commonly employed in the Scriptures. The common representation is, that the heavens are stretched out as a curtain or tent, or sometimes as a solid concave sphere in which the heavenly bodies are fixed (See Notes on Isa. xxxiv. 4), and that the earth is an immense plain, surrounded by water, which reached the concave heavens in which the stars were fixed. Occasionally the earth is

represented as supported by pillars, or as resting on a solid foundation; and once we meet with an intimation that it is globular, and suspended in space.

In the following passages the earth and the sky are represented as supported by pillars:

He shaketh the earth out of her place,  
And the pillars thereof tremble. ch. ix. 6.

The pillars of heaven tremble,  
And are astonished at his rebuke. ch. xxvi. 11.

In the latter passage the reference is to mountains, which seem to uphold the sky as pillars, in accordance with the common and popular representation among the ancients. Thus Mount Atlas, in Mauritania, was represented as a pillar on which heaven was suspended:

"Atlas' broad shoulders prop th' incumbent skies,  
Around his cloud-girt head the stars arise."

In the following passage the earth is represented as suspended on nothing, and there would seem to be a slight evidence that the true doctrine about the form of the earth was then known:

He stretcheth out the North over the empty space,  
And hangeth the earth upon nothing. ch. xxvi. 7.

See particularly the notes on that passage. Though the belief seems to have been that the earth was thus "self-balanced," yet there is no intimation that they were acquainted with the fact that it revolves on its axis, or around the sun as a centre.

### 3. GEOGRAPHY.

There are few intimations of the prevalent knowledge of geography in the time of Job. In one instance foreign regions are mentioned, though there is no certainty that the countries beyond Palestine are there referred to:

Have ye not inquired of the travellers?  
And will ye not hear their testimony? ch. xxi. 29.

In the close of the book, in the mention of the hippopotamus and the crocodile, there is evidence that there was some knowledge of the land of Egypt, though no intimation is given of the situation or extent of that country.

The cardinal points are referred to, and there is evidence in this book, as well as elsewhere in the Scriptures, that the geographer then regarded himself as looking towards the East. The South was thus the "right hand," the North the left hand, and the West the region "behind."

Behold, I go to the East, and he is not there ;  
 And to the West, but I cannot perceive him ;  
 To the North, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him ;  
 He hideth himself on the South, that I cannot see him. ch. xxiii. 8.

See the Notes on this verse for an explanation of the terms used. Comp. the following places, where similar geographical terms occur. Judges xviii. 12; Deut. xi. 24; Zech. xiv. 8; Ex. x. 19; Josh. xvii. 7; 2 Kings xxiii. 13; 1 Sam. xxiii. 24; Gen. xiv. 15; Josh. xix. 27.

Whatever was the form of the earth, and the manner in which it was sustained, it is evident from the following passage that the land was regarded as surrounded by a waste of waters, whose outer limit was deep and impenetrable darkness :

He hath drawn a circular bound upon the waters,  
 To the confines of the light and darkness. ch. xxvi. 10.

Yet the whole subject is represented as one with which man was then unacquainted, and which was beyond his grasp :

Hast thou observed the breadths of the earth ?  
 Declare, if thou knowest it all. ch. xxxviii. 18.

For a full illustration of this passage, and the views of geography which then prevailed, the reader is referred to the Notes. It is evident that the knowledge of geography, so far as is indicated by this book, was then very limited, though it should also be said that in the argument of the poem there was little occasion to refer to knowledge of this kind, and that few intimations are to be expected on the subject.

#### 4. METEOROLOGY.

There are much more frequent intimations of the state of knowledge on the various subjects embraced under this head, than of either astronomy or geography. These intimations show that these subjects had excited much attention, and had been the result of careful observation; and in regard to some of them there are indications of a plausible theory of their causes, though most of them are appealed to as among the inscrutable things of God. The *facts* excited the wonder of the Arabian observers, and they clothed their conceptions of them in the most beautiful language of poetry; but they do not often attempt to explain them. On the contrary, these obvious and undisputed *facts*, so inscrutable to them, are referred to as full proof that we cannot hope to comprehend the ways of God, and as a reason why we should bow before him with profound adoration. Among the things referred to are the following :

(a) The Aurora Borealis, or Northern lights. Thus the mag-

nificent description of the approach of the **Almighty** to close the controversy, (ch. xxxvii. 21—23,) seems to have been borrowed by Elihu from the beautiful lights of the North, in accordance with the common opinion that the North was the seat of the Divinity:

And now—man cannot look upon the bright splendor that is on the  
For the wind passeth along and maketh them clear. [clouds!]  
Golden splendor approaches from the North:—  
How fearful is the majesty of God!  
The Almighty! we cannot find him out!  
Great in power and in justice, and vast in righteousness!

Comp. Notes on Isa. xiv. 13, and on Job xxiii. 9.

(b) Tornadoes, whirlwinds, and tempests, were the subject of careful observation. The sources whence they usually came were attentively marked, and the various phenomena which they exhibited were so observed that the author of the poem was able to describe them with the highest degree of poetic beauty:

With his hands he covereth the lightning,  
And commandeth it where to strike.  
He pointeth out to it his friends—  
The collecting of his wrath is upon the wicked.  
At this also my heart palpitates,  
And is moved out of its place.  
Hear, O hear, the thunder of his voice!  
The muttering thunder that goes forth from his mouth!  
He directeth it under the whole heaven,  
And his lightning to the ends of the earth.  
He thundereth with the voice of his majesty,  
And he will not restrain the tempest when his voice is heard.  
ch. xxvi. 32, 33; xxxvii. 1—5.

Terrors come upon him like waters,  
In the night a tempest stealeth him away.  
The East wind carrieth him away, and he departeth,  
And it sweeps him away from his place. ch. xxvi. 20, 21.

(c) The *dew* had been carefully observed, yet the speakers did not understand its phenomena. How it was produced; whether it descended from the atmosphere, or ascended from the earth, they did not profess to be able to explain. It was regarded as one of the things which God only could understand; yet the manner in which it is spoken of shows that it had attracted deep attention, and led to much inquiry:

Hath the rain a father?  
And who hath begotten the drops of the dew? ch. xxxviii. 28.

(d) The same remarks may be made of the formation of the hoar-frost, of snow, of hail, and of ice. There is no *theory* suggested to account for them, but they are regarded as among the things which

God alone could comprehend, and which evinced his wisdom. There had been evidently much careful observation of the facts, and much inquiry into the cause of these things; but the speakers did not profess to be able to explain them. To this day, also, there is much about them which is unexplained, and the farther the investigation is carried, the more occasion is there to admire the wisdom of God in the formation of these things. See the Notes on the passages that will now be referred to:

From whose womb came the ice?  
The hoar-frost of heaven, who gave it birth? ch. xxxviii. 29.  
By the breath of God frost is produced,  
And the broad waters become compressed. ch. xxxvii. 10.  
For he saith to the snow, "Be thou on the earth." ch. xxxvii. 6.  
Hast thou been into the storehouses of snow?  
Or seen the storehouses of hail,  
Which I have reserved until the time of trouble,  
To the day of battle and war? ch. xxxviii. 22, 23.

(e) The dawning of the morning is described with great beauty, and is represented as wholly beyond the power of man to produce or explain:

Hast thou, in thy life, given commandment to the morning?  
Or caused the dawn to know his place?  
That it may seize on the far corners of the earth,  
And scatter the robbers before it?  
It turns itself along like clay under the seal,  
And all things stand forth as if in gorgeous apparel.\*  
ch. xxxviii. 12—14.

(f) So all the phenomena of light are represented as evincing the wisdom of God, and as wholly beyond the ability of man to explain or comprehend them; yet so represented as to show that it had been a subject of careful observation and reflection:

Where is the way to the dwelling-place of light?  
And the darkness, where is its place?  
That thou couldst conduct it to its limits,  
And that thou shouldst know the path to its dwelling?  
ch. xxxviii. 19, 20.

(g) The clouds and rain also had been carefully observed, and the laws which governed them were among the inscrutable things of God:

Who can number the clouds by wisdom?  
And who can empty the bottles of heaven? ch. xxxviii. 37.

The clouds seem to have been regarded as a solid substance capable of holding rain like a leathern bottle, and the rain was caused by their emptying themselves on the earth. Yet the whole pheno-

\* For the meaning of this uncommonly beautiful imagery, see the Notes on this place.



mena were considered to be beyond the comprehension of man. The laws by which the clouds were suspended in the air, and the reason why the rain descended in small drops instead of gushing floods, were alike incomprehensible :

Who also can understand the outspreading of the clouds,  
And the fearful thunderings in his pavilion? ch. xxxvi. 29.

For he draweth up the drops of water ;  
They distil rain in his vapor,  
Which the clouds pour down ;  
They pour it upon man in abundance. ch. xxxvi. 27, 28.

He bindeth up the waters in the thick clouds,  
And the cloud is not rent under them. ch. xxvi. 8.

(*h*) The sea had also attracted the attention of these ancient observers, and there were phenomena there which they could not explain :

Who shut up the sea with doors,  
In its bursting forth as from the womb ?  
When I made the cloud its garment,  
And swathed it in thick darkness,  
I measured out for it its limits,  
And fixed its bars and doors,  
And said, Thus far shalt thou come, but no farther !  
And here shall thy proud waves be stayed ! ch. xxxviii. 8—11.

There is a reference here, undoubtedly, to the creation ; but as this is the language of God describing that event, it cannot be determined with certainty that a knowledge of the method of creation had been communicated to them by tradition. But language like this implies that there had been a careful observation of the ocean, and that there were things in regard to it which were to them incomprehensible. The passage is a most sublime description of the creation of the mighty mass of waters, and while it is entirely consistent with the account in Genesis, it supplies some important circumstances not recorded there.

## 5. MINING OPERATIONS.

The twenty-eighth chapter of the book—one of the most beautiful portions of the Bible—contains a statement of the method of mining then practised, and shows that the art was well understood. The mechanical devices mentioned, and the skill with which the process was carried on, evince considerable advance in the arts:

Truly, there is a vein for silver,  
And a place for gold where they refine it.  
Iron is obtained from the earth,  
And ore is fused into copper.

Man putteth an end to darkness,  
 And completely searches everything—  
 The rocks, the thick darkness, and the shadow of death.  
 He sinks a shaft far from a human dwelling;  
 They, unsupported by the feet, hang suspended;  
 Far from men they swing to and fro.  
 The earth, out of it cometh bread;  
 And when turned up beneath, it resembles fire.  
 Its stones are the places of sapphires,  
 And gold dust pertains to it.  
 The path thereto no bird knoweth,  
 And the vulture's eye hath not seen it.  
 The fierce wild beasts have not trodden it,  
 And the lion hath not walked over it.  
 Man layeth his hand upon the flinty rock;  
 He overturneth mountains from their foundations;  
 He cutteth out canals among the rocks,  
 And his eye seeth every precious thing.  
 He restraineth the streams from trickling down,  
 And bringeth hidden things to light. vers. 1—11.

The operation of mining must have early attracted attention, for the art of working metals, and of course their value, was understood in a very early age of the world. Tubal Cain is described as an "instructor of every artificer in brass and iron." Gen. iv. 22. The description in Job shows that this art had received much attention, and that in his time it had been carried to a high degree of perfection. See Notes on ch. xxviii. 1—11.

#### 6. PRECIOUS STONES.

There is frequent mention of precious stones in the book of Job, and it is evident that they were regarded as of great value, and were used for ornament. The following are mentioned, as among the precious stones, though some of them are now ascertained to be of little value. There is evidence that they judged, as was necessarily the case in the early age of the world, rather from appearances than from any chemical knowledge of their nature.

The onyx and sapphire:

It [wisdom] cannot be estimated by the gold of Ophir;  
 By the precious onyx, or the sapphire. ch. xxviii. 16.

Coral, crystal, and rubies:

No mention shall be made of coral or of crystal;  
 For the price of wisdom is above rubies. ch. xxviii. 18.

The topaz found in Ethiopia, or Cush:

The topaz of Cush cannot equal it,  
 Nor can it be purchased with pure gold. ch. xxviii. 19.

These were found as the result of the processes of mining, though

it is not known that the art of engraving on them was known. It is, moreover, not entirely easy to fix the signification of the original words used here. See Notes on ch. xxviii.

## 7. COINING, WRITING, ENGRAVING.

It is not quite certain, though there is some evidence, that the art of coining was known in the days of Job. The solution of this question depends on the meaning of the word rendered "a piece of money," in ch. xlii. 11. For an examination of this, the reader is referred to the Notes on that verse.

There is the fullest evidence that the art of writing was then known:

Oh that my words were now written !  
 Oh that they were engraved on a tablet !  
 That with an iron graver, and with lead,  
 They were engraven upon a rock for ever ! ch. xix. 23, 24.

Oh that He would hear me !  
 Behold my defence ! May the Almighty answer me !  
 Would that he who contends with me would write down his charge  
 Truly upon my shoulder would I bear it ;  
 I would bind it upon me as a diadem. ch. xxxi. 35, 36.

The materials for writing are not indeed particularly mentioned, but it is evident that permanent records on stone were made; that this was done sometimes by making use of lead; and also that it was common to make use of portable materials, and as would seem, of *flexible* materials, since Job speaks (ch. xxxi.) of binding the charge of his adversary, when written down, around his head, like a turban or diadem. Comp. Notes on Isa. viii. 1, xxx. 8. Though the papyrus, or 'paper reed,' of Egypt, seems to be once alluded to (see Notes on ch. viii. 11), yet there is no evidence that it was known as a material for writing.

## 8. THE MEDICAL ART.

Physicians are once mentioned :

For truly ye are forgers of fallacies;  
 Physicians of no value, all of you. ch. xiii. 4.

But there is no intimation of the methods of cure, or of the remedies that were applied. It is remarkable that, so far as appears, no methods were taken to cure the extraordinary malady of Job himself. He excluded himself from society, sat down in dust and ashes, and merely attempted to remove the offensive matter that the disease collected on his person; ch. ii. 8. So far as appears from the Scriptures, the means of cure resorted to in early times

were chiefly external applications. See Notes on Isa. i. 6; xxxviii. 21, 22. "Physicians" are mentioned in Gen. l. 2, but only in connexion with embalming, where it is said that "Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel."

## 9. MUSIC.

Musical instruments are mentioned in the book of Job in such a manner as to show that the subject of music had attracted attention, though we may not be able now to ascertain the exact form of the instruments which were employed :

They excite themselves with the tabor and the harp,  
And rejoice at the sound of the pipe. ch. xxi. 12.

My harp also is turned to mourning,  
And my pipes to notes of grief. ch. xxx. 31.

For an explanation of these terms, the reader is referred to the Notes on these passages. We have evidence that music was cultivated long before the time in which it is supposed Job lived (Gen. iv. 21), though there is no certainty that even in his time it had reached a high degree of perfection.

## 10. HUNTING.

One of the earliest arts practised in society would be that of taking and destroying wild beasts; and we find several allusions to the methods in which this was done, in the book of Job. Nets, gins, and pitfalls, were made use of for this purpose; and in order to drive the wild beasts into the nets or pitfalls, it was customary for a number of persons to extend themselves in a forest, inclosing a large space, and gradually drawing nearer to each other and to the centre :

His strong steps shall be straitened,  
And his own plans shall cast him down.  
For he is brought into his net by his own feet,  
And into the pitfall he walks.  
The snare takes him by the heel,  
And the gin takes fast hold of him.  
A net is secretly laid for him in the ground,  
And a trap for him in the pathway. ch. xviii. 7—10.

The howling of dogs, and the shouts of the hunters, are represented as filling the wild animal with dismay, and as harassing him as he attempts to escape :

Terrors alarm him on every side,  
And harass him at his heels. ch. xviii. 11.

While spent with hunger and fatigue, he is entangled in the spread nets, and becomes an easy prey for the hunter :

His strength shall be exhausted by hunger,  
And destruction shall seize upon his side.  
It shall devour the vigor of his frame,  
The first-born of Death shall devour his limbs. ch. xviii. 12, 13.

Comp. Ps. cxi. 4, 5. Ezek. xix. 6—9.

## 11. METHODS OF HUSBANDRY.

The customs of the pastoral life, one of the chief employments of early ages, are often referred to ; ch. i. iii. 16 ; xlii. 12.

He shall never look upon the rivulets—  
The streams of the valley—of honey and butter. ch. xx. 17.

When I washed my steps with cream,  
And the rock poured me out rivers of oil. ch. xxix. 6.

Ploughing with oxen is mentioned, ch. i. 14. So also ch. xxxi 38,—40 :

If my land cry out against me,  
And the furrows likewise complain ;  
If I have eaten its fruits without payment,  
And extorted the living of its owners ;  
Let thistles grow up instead of wheat,  
And noxious weeds instead of barley. ch. xxxi. 38—40.

The cultivation of the vine and the olive, and the pressure of grapes and olives, is mentioned :

He shall cast his unripe fruit as the vine,  
And shed his blossoms like the olive. ch. xv. 33.

They reap their grain in the field [of others],  
And they gather the vintage of the oppressor. ch. xxiv. 6.

They cause them to express oil within their walls ;  
They tread their wine-presses, and yet they suffer thirst. ch. xxiv. 11.

It is remarkable that in the book of Job there is no mention of the palm, the pomegranate, or any species of flowers. In a country like Arabia, where the date now is so important an article of food, it would have been reasonable to anticipate that there would have been some allusion to it. Little is known, from what is said, of the implements of husbandry, and nothing forbids us to suppose that they were of the rudest sort.

## 12. MODES OF TRAVELLING.

From the earliest period in the East the mode of travelling to any distance appears to have been by caravans, or companies. Two objects seem to have been contemplated by this in making

long journeys across pathless deserts that were much infested by robbers; the one was the purpose of self-defence, the other, mutual accommodation. For the purposes of those travelling companies, camels are admirably adapted by nature, alike from their ability to bear burdens, from the scantiness of food which they require, and for their being able to travel far without water. Caravans are first mentioned in Gen. xxxvii. 25, "And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt." A beautiful notice of this mode of travelling occurs in Job (vi. 15—20), as being common in his time:

My brethren are faithless as a brook,  
Like the streams of the valley that pass away;  
Which are turbid by means of the [melted] ice,  
In which the snow is hid [by being dissolved].  
In the time when they become warm they evaporate.  
When the heat cometh, they are dried up from their place;  
They channels of their way wind round about;  
They go into nothing, and are lost.  
The caravans of Tema look;  
The travelling companies of Sheba expect to see them.  
They are ashamed that they have relied on them,  
They come even to the place, and are confounded.

There is, in one place in Job, a slight intimation that runners or carriers were employed to carry messages when extraordinary speed was demanded, though there is no evidence that this was a settled custom, or that it was regulated by law:

And my days are swifter than a runner;  
They flee away, and they see no good. ch. ix. 25.

Connected with the subject of travelling, we may remark, that the art of making light boats or skiffs from reeds appears to have been known, though there is no mention of ships, or of distant navigation:

They pass on like the reed-skiffs;  
As the eagle darting on its prey. ch. ix. 26.

### 13. THE MILITARY ART.

There are in the book of Job frequent allusions to weapons of war, and to modes of attack and defence, such as to show that the subject had attracted much attention, and that war then was by no means unknown. In the poem we find the following allusions to the weapons used, and to the methods of attack and defence.

**To poisoned arrows :**

For the arrows of the Almighty are within me,  
 Their poison drinketh up my spirit;  
 The terrors of God set themselves in array against me. ch. vi. 4

**To the shield :**

He runneth upon him with outstretched neck,  
 With the thick bosses of his shields. ch. xv. 26.

**To the methods of attack, and the capture of a walled town :**

He set me up for a mark,  
 His archers came around me;  
 He transfix'd my reins, and did not spare;  
 My gall hath he poured out upon the ground.  
 He breaketh me with breach upon breach;  
 He rusheth upon me like a mighty man. ch. xvi. 12—14.

**To the iron weapon and the bow of brass :**

He shall flee from the iron weapon,  
 But the bow of brass shall pierce him through. ch. xx. 24.

**To the works cast up by a besieging army for the annoyance of a city by their weapons of war :**

His troops advance together against me;  
 They throw up their way against me,  
 And they encamp round about my dwelling. ch. xix. 12.

In this connexion, also, should be mentioned the sublime description of the war-horse in ch. xxxix. 19, seq. The horse was undoubtedly used in war, and a more sublime description of this animal caparisoned for battle, and impatient for the contest, does not occur in any language :

Hast thou given the horse his strength?  
 Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?  
 Dost thou make him to leap as the locust?  
 How terrible is the glory of his nostrils!  
 He paweth in the valley; he exulteth in his strength;  
 He goeth forth into the midst of arms.  
 He laugheth at fear, and is nothing daunted;  
 And he turneth not back from the sword.  
 Upon him rattleth the quiver,  
 The glittering spear, and the lance.  
 In his fierceness and rage he devoureth the ground,  
 And will no longer stand still when the trumpet sounds.  
 When the trumpet sounds, he saith, 'Aha!'  
 And from afar he snuffeth the battle—  
 The war-cry of the princes, and the battle-shout.

**14. ZOOLOGY.**

The references to zoology in this book, which are numerous, and which show that the habits of many portions of the animated

creation had been observed with great care, may be ranked under the heads of insects, reptiles, birds, and beasts.

(a) Of insects, the only two that are mentioned are the spider and the moth:

His hope shall rot,  
And his trust shall be the building of the spider.  
He shall lean upon his dwelling, and it shall not stand;  
He shall grasp it, but it shall not endure. ch. viii. 14, 15.

Behold, in his servants he putteth no confidence,  
And his angels he chargeth with frailty;  
How much more true is this of those who dwell in houses of clay,  
Whose foundation is in the dust!  
They are crushed before the moth-worm! ch. iv. 18, 19.

He buildeth his house like the moth,  
Or like a shed which the watchman maketh. ch. xxvii. 18.

(b) Of reptiles, we find the asp and the viper mentioned:

He shall suck the poison of asps;  
The viper's tongue shall destroy him. ch. xx. 16.

(c) The birds or fowls that are mentioned in this book are much more numerous. They are the following, nearly all so mentioned as to show that their habits had been the subject of careful observation.

The vulture:

The path thereto no bird knoweth,  
And the vulture's eye hath not seen it. ch. xxviii. 7.

The raven:

Who provideth for the raven his food,  
When his young ones cry unto God,  
And wander for lack of food? ch. xxxviii. 41.

The stork and the ostrich:

A wing of exulting fowls moves joyfully!  
Is it the wing and plumage of the stork?  
For she leaveth her eggs upon the ground,  
And upon the dust she warmeth them,  
And forgetteth that her foot may crush them,  
And that the wild beast may break them.  
She is hardened towards her young, as if they were not hers;  
In vain is her travail, and without solicitude;  
Because God hath withheld wisdom from her,  
And hath not imparted to her understanding.  
In the time when she raiseth herself up on high,  
She laugheth at the horse and his rider. ch. xxxix. 13—18.

The eagle and the hawk:

Is it by thy understanding that the hawk flieth,  
And spreadeth his wings toward the south?



Is it at thy command that the eagle mounteth up,  
 And that he buildeth his nest on high?  
 He inhabiteth the rock and abideth there—  
 Upon the crag of the rock, and the high fortress.  
 From thence he spieth out his prey,  
 His eyes discern it from afar.  
 His young ones greedily gulp down blood;  
 And where the slain are, there is he. ch. xxxix. 26—30.

(d) The beasts that are mentioned are, also, quite numerous, and the description of some of them constitutes the most magnificent part of the poem. The descriptions of the various animals are also more minute than anything else referred to, and but a few of them can be copied without transcribing whole chapters. The beasts referred to are the following:

The camel, sheep, ox, and she-ass, ch. i. 3, xlii. 12.

The lion:

The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion [are silenced],  
 And the teeth of young lions are broken out.  
 The old lion perishes for want of prey,  
 And the whelps of the lioness are scattered abroad. ch. iv. 10, 11.

The wild ass:

Doth the wild ass bray in the midst of grass?  
 Or loweth the ox over his fodder? ch. vi. 5.  
 Who hath sent forth the wild ass free?  
 Or who hath loosed the bonds of the wild ass?  
 Whose home I have made the wilderness,  
 And his dwellings the barren land.  
 He scorneth the uproar of the city;  
 The cry of the driver he heedeth not.  
 The range of the mountains is his pasture:  
 He searcheth after every green thing. ch. xxxix. 5—8.

The dog:

But now they who are younger than I have me in derision,  
 Whose fathers I would have disdained to set with the dogs of my flock.  
 h. xxx. 1.

The jackal:

I am become a brother to the jackal,  
 And a companion to the ostrich. ch. xxx. 29.

The mountain-goat and the hind:

Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth?  
 Or canst thou observe the birth-throes of the hind?  
 Canst thou number the months that they fulfil?  
 Knowest thou the season when they bring forth?  
 They bow themselves; they give birth to their young;  
 They cast forth their sorrows.  
 Their young ones increase in strength,  
 They grow up in the wilderness,  
 They go from them, and return no more. ch. xxxix. 1—4.

## The unicorn:

Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee?  
 Will he abide through the night at thy crib?  
 Wilt thou bind him with his band to the furrow?  
 And will he harrow the valleys after thee?  
 Wilt thou trust him because his strength is great?  
 Or wilt thou commit thy labor to him?  
 Wilt thou have confidence in him to bring in thy grain?  
 Or to gather it to thy threshing-floor? ch. xxxix. 9—12.

The war-horse, in a splendid passage already quoted, ch. xxxix. 19—25. And, finally, the behemoth or hippopotamus, and the leviathan or crocodile, in ch. xl. 15—24, xli.—perhaps the most splendid descriptions of animals to be found anywhere in poetry. For the nature and habits of the animals there described, as well as of those already referred to, the reader is referred to the Notes.

Such is a mere reference to the various topics of science and the arts referred to in the book of Job. Though brief, yet they furnish us with an invaluable account of the progress which society had then made; and in order to obtain an estimate of the state of the world on these subjects at an early period, there is no better means now at command than a careful study of this book. The scene of the book is laid in the vicinity of those portions of the earth which had made the greatest progress in science and the arts; and from this poem we may learn, with considerable accuracy, probably, what advances had then been made in Babylon and in Egypt.

## IX.

*Exegetical helps to the book of Job.*

## 1. THE ANCIENT VERSIONS.

The Vulgate, Septuagint, Syriac, and the Chaldee Paraphrase. For the general character of these versions, and their value in interpreting the Old Testament, see Introduction to Isaiah, § 8. Of the book of Job, the Vulgate is, in general, a very fair and correct version. The translation of the Septuagint is much inferior to what it is on the Pentateuch, and some of the other books of the Bible, though superior to the translation of Isaiah. There are various attempts at explanation of difficulties in it, and statements of things as *facts*, for which there is no authority in the original—showing that if these were inserted by the translators themselves, there was an effort to make it as clear as possible. Whether these, however, were inserted by the translators, or have been interpolated by later hands, it is not easy now to determine. The same attempt at explanation occurs, but much more frequently, in the Targum,

or Chaldee Paraphrase. In that work, however, this is much more excusable than in what was designed as a strict translation, for the word *Targum* (תַּרְגוּם, *interpretation, translation, explanation of one language by another*) will admit with propriety considerable latitude of explanation in the attempt to render a work from one language into another. See Buxtorf, *Lex. Chald. Talmud.* The old Syriac version is literal, and, so far as I can judge, is incomparably the best ancient version of the Scriptures which has been made. Its aid is of great value in the exposition of the Bible.

## 2. HEBREW WRITERS.

Abraham Ben Juda, published under the name of חֲדָרִי לָקָם, i. e., *Compositiones Collectanæ*, a commentary on the Prophets, Megilloth, and Hagiographa, collected chiefly from Jarchi, Aben-Ezra, and Levi Ben Gersom, 1593 and 1612, fol.

Abraham Ben Meir, Aben-Esræ, Commentary on Job. Found in the Rabbinic editions of the Bible, Venice, 1525, 1526, Basle, 1618, 1619, and Amsterdam, 1724. "In multifarious erudition, and accurate knowledge of the Hebrew language, and in a happy tact of hitting the sense of his author, Aben-Ezra greatly surpasses all his contemporaries." *Rosenmüller*. He has made much use of the Arabic language; but on account of his conciseness, he is often obscure.

Abraham Ben Mardochai Perizol, Commentary on Job in the Bible published at Venice, 1517, and Amsterdam, 1724.

Isaac Cohen, Ben Schelomoh, Commentary on Job with the Hebrew text, Constantinople, 1545.

Isaac Ben Schelomoh Jabez, who lived at Constantinople in the 16th century, also published a commentary on Job, inscribed יִרְאֵת שְׁרִי, "The fear of the Almighty," which is found in the edition of the Bible at Amsterdam, 1724.

Levi Ben Gerschom, born 1288, died 1370. In 1326 he wrote a commentary on Job, which was first published in 1477. It was republished at Naples in 1487, and is found in the Rabbinical Bibles. This is the most copious and clear of the Rabbinical commentaries. He gives an explanation of the words and phrases in the book, and accompanies it with a paraphrase.

Meir Ben Isaac Arama, born 1492, died at Thessalonica, 1556. He wrote a commentary on Job called מֵאִיר אֵיב, "Illustrating Job," which was published in fol. at Thessalonica, in 1516, and subsequently at Venice, 1567 and 1603.

Moseh Alscheh, of Galilee. He died about 1601. He wrote a commentary on Job, called חֶלֶקֶת מְחֻקֶּק, "The Portion of the

Legislator." It was published at Venice, 1603-4. Again in 1722 and 1725.

Moses Nachmanides. He lived in the 13th century. A commentary of his on Job is found in the Rabbinical Bible, Venice, 1517, and Amsterdam, 1724.

Obadiah Ben Jacob Sphorno. He wrote a commentary on Job with the title, *משפט צדק*, "The Judgment of the Just." Venice, 1590, and Amsterdam, 1724.

Schelomoh Jarchi Ben Jizchak, commonly called *Rasche*. He lived in Campania in the 11th century. His commentary on Job, and on the other books of the Old Testament, is found in the Rabbinical Bible published at Venice and Amsterdam. This work of Jarchi is of great authority among the Hebrews. He has collected and preserved most of the interpretations handed down by tradition.

Schelomoh Ben Melech. He lived at Constantinople in the 16th century. He published a commentary on the whole of the Old Testament under the title of *מכלל יופי*, "Perfection of Beauty." Amsterdam, 1661 and 1663, fol. In this work he was much aided by the celebrated David Kimchi.

Schimeon Ben Zemach Duran, a Spanish Jew of the 15th century. He wrote a commentary on Job called *אהבה משפט*, "Loving Judgment." Venice, 1590-4.

### 3. THE FATHERS.

Catena in beatissimum Job absolutissima e xxiv Græciæ doctorum explanationibus contexta a PAULO COMITOLO Perusiano. Lyons, 1586, Venice, 1587.

The same published under the title of Catena Græcorum Patrum in beatum Job, etc., by Niceta. He revised the work and amended it, and greatly increased it. This was published under the care of P. Junius, Royal Librarian, in London, 1637, fol.

Ephrem the Syrian. Commentary, or Scholia on Job, in Syriac. Found in his works.

Jerome. Commentary found in his works. It is of very little value. The principles of interpretation are fanciful. Jerome held that Job was a type of Christ; that the land of Uz represents the Virgin Mary; that his seven sons were the seven-form spirit of grace; that his daughters were the law, the prophets, and the gospel; that the sheep represented the church, and the camels the depravity of the Gentiles; the oxen, which are clean animals, represent the Jews! Notes on ch. i. 6.

Augustine. Found in his works.

Philip, Presbyter, lived about A.D. 440. Basle, 1527. His commentary is allegorical and mystical.

Gregory the Great, A.D. 590. *Expositiones in Job*. Rome, 1475. Paris, 1495, fol.; and in French, Paris, 1666-1669.

#### 4. CATHOLIC VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES.

Thomæ De Vio Caietani (Cardinal and Bishop) *Commentarii in Librum Jobi*, Rome, 1535, fol. Cardinal Cajetan was ignorant of the Hebrew language, but a man of distinguished talent. Had he been as much acquainted with the Hebrew, says Rosenmüller, as he was distinguished for genius and the power of judgment, he would have greatly excelled all who went before him in the explanation of Job.

Franc. Titelmanni, *Elucidatio paraphastica in Jobum*. Antwerp, 1547, 1550, 1553, 1556. Lyons, 1554.

Augustini Steuchi, *Enarrationes in Librum Jobi*. Venice, 1567. He was well acquainted with the Hebrew and Chaldee languages.

Joa. Merceri *Commentarii in Job*. Geneva, 1573.

C. Sanctii *Commentarius in Job*. Lugd. Bat. 1625, fol.

Cypriani De Huerga, *Commentaria in xviii. priora Capita Jobi*. 1582, fol.

Didaci De Zuniga, *Commentaria in Librum Jobi*. Rome, 1591. This professes to explain and reconcile the Hebrew, Latin Vulgate, and Septuagint.

J. De Pineda, *Commentariorum in Librum Jobi, Libri xiii*. With a paraphrase. 1597, 1602, fol. Often reprinted. 1600, 1605, 1613, 1619, 1627, 1631, 1685, 1701, 1710. This work is highly commended by Schultens.

*Liber Job paraphrasticè explicatus a Joanne a Jesu Maria*. Rome, 1611.

Jacobi Jansonii, *Enarrationes in propheticum Librum Job*. 1623, 1643, fol.

Gasparis Sanctii, in *Librum Job commentarii cum Paraphrasi*. 1625, fol. Lyons. 1712, Leipsic.

Jacob Bolducii, *commentaria in Librum Job*. Paris, 1638.

Balthas. Corderii *Jobus explicatus*. Antwerp, 1646 and 1656, fol.

Philippi Codurci, *Scholia seu Adnotationes in Jobum*. Paris, 1651.

*Jobi brevi commentario et Metaphrasi poetica illustratus, Scripsit Franciscus Vavassor*. Paris, 1638.

*Analyse du livre de Job (par Laur. Daniel)*. Lyon, 1710.

*Le Livre de Job, selon la Vulgate, Paraphrase, avec des remarques, par Jean Hardouin*. 2 vol. Paris, 1729.

Il Libro de Giobbe dal testo Ebreo in versi Italiani dall' Giacinto Ceruti. Rome, 1773.

#### 5. PROTESTANT VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES.

Jo. Bugenhagii, Adnotationes in Jobum. 1526.

Mart. Buceri, Commentaria in librum Job. 1228, fol.

Jo. Cœcolampadii, Exegemata in Job et Danielelem. Basle, 1532, 1533, 1536. Geneva, 1532, 1533, 1567, 1578, fol. French, at Geneva, 1562.

Mart. Borrhai, alias Cellarii, Commentarius in Jobum. 1532, 1539, 1610.

Reinhardi Lutzi, Adnotationes in Librum Jobi. 1539, 1563.

Jo. Calvini, Conciones in Jobum. 1569, 1593. French, 1563, 1611. German, 1587. English, London, 1584, fol.

Victorini Strigellii, Liber Job, ad Ebraicam veritatem recognitus, et Argumentis atque Scholiis illustratus. 1566, 1571.

Ivan. Merceri, Commentarii in Librum Job. Geneva, 1573, fol. With a letter from Beza appended.

Jobus Commentario et Paraphrasi illustratus a Theodoro Beza. Geneva, 1583, 1589, 1599, 1600.

Roberti Rolloci (a minister at Edinburgh) Commentarius in Jobum. Geneva, 1610.

Jo. Piscatoris, Commentarius in Librum Job. 1612.

Joh. Drusius, Nova Versio et Scholia in Jobum. Amsterdam, 1636. A posthumous work.

Explications sur le livre de Job, Pseaumes, Proverbes, Ecclesiaste, et Cantique, par Jean Diodati. Geneva, 1638.

Exposition of the Book of Job, by George Abbott. London, 1640.

Abbott's Paraphrase of the Book of Job. 1640, 4to. It is formed on the basis of the English version, and contains no notes.

Christophori Schulteti, Analysis typica concionum habitatum in Job, etc. 1647, fol.

Joh. Cocceii, Commentarius in Librum Jobi. 1644, fol. "A diffuse work, and filled with numerous disputations merely theological." *Rosenmüller*.

Jo. Meiern, Commentaria in Job, Proverbia, Ecclesiasten, et in Canticum Canticorum. 1651, fol.

Ed. Leigh, Annotations on the five poetical Books of the Old Testament. London, 1657, fol.

Terenti, Liber Jobi, Chald. Græc. et Lat. 1663, 4to.

Spanheim, Historia Jobi. 1672.

Joh. cour. Zelleri, Auslegung des Büchleins Hiob. **Hamburg**, 1667.

Exposition of the Book of Job, being the sum of 316 Lectures, by George Hutcheson, (of Edinburgh.) London, 1669, fol.

Caryl's Exposition of the Book of Job, two vols. fol. 1669. This work was originally published in six vols. 4to. "The author was a respectable scholar, a useful preacher, and an exemplary man. He was a nonconformist minister. He was concerned in an English-Greek Lexicon." The work is too voluminous to be much consulted, or to be generally useful.

Sebast. Schmidii in Librum Jobi Commentarius, etc. 1670, 1680, 1690, 1705. Commended by Schultens for the careful comparison of the different versions, the accurate examination of words, and the clearness of the method. There is, however, too constant a reference to theological questions debated in the time of the author between the Lutherans and the Reformed.

Petr. Van Hoecke on Job. Leyden, 1697.

Theod. Antonis (a Dutch commentator) on Job. Frankfort, 1702. He holds that the book of Job is a representation or a type of the church in its afflictions and persecutions.

A Paraphrase on the Book of Job, by Richard Blackmore. London, 1700.

Das Buch Hiob aus dem Hebräischen Grundtext aufs neue getreulich ins Teusche übersetzt u. s. w. von Renato Andrea Kortüm. Leips. 1708.

Pauli Egerdi, Erläuterung des Buches Hiob. u. s. w. von. Joh. Hein. Michaelis. 1716. Published after the death of the author.

Animadversiones philologicæ in Jobum, etc. Auc. Albert Schultens. 1708.

Joh. Hen. Michaelis, Notæ uberiores in Librum Jobi, in vol. ii. of his Annotations on the Hagiographa. Halle, 1720.

Herm. Von der Hardt, on Job. 1728, fol.

Jobi Physica Sacra, oder Hiobs Naturwissenschaft verglichen mit der heutigen, von. Joh. Jac. Scheutzer. 1721. The author sometimes attributes views of science to the speakers in the book of Job which there is no certain evidence that they possessed. Still the work of Scheutzer contains much that is valuable. It extends to the whole Bible, and is in 8 vols. fol. in Latin and German, with numerous valuable plates.

Theodore de Hase, de Leviathan Jobi et Ceto Jonæ. Bremen, 1723, 8vo.

Le Livre de Job, traduit en Francois, sur l'original Hebrew, par Theod. Criusoz. Rotterdam, 1729.

Veteris Testamenti Libri Hagiographi, ex translatione Joannis Clerici. Amsterdam, 1731, fol. He regards the book of Job as written *after* the return from the Babylonish exile.

Annotations on the Book of Job and the Psalms, by Thomas Fenton. London, 1732.

Joh. Adolf Hoffmaus *Neue Erklärung des Buchs Hiob u. s. w.* Hamburg, 1734. This work professes to illustrate Job from the remains of antiquity, and from the Oriental philosophy. The author found deep mysteries in the book, and is much addicted to the allegorical mode of interpretation. The work is now of little value.

Samuel Wesley *Dissertationes et Conjecturæ in Librum Jobi, tabulis geographicis et figuris ænis illustratæ.* London, 1736, fol.

*Liber Jobi, cum nova versione, ad Hebræum fontem, et commentario perpetuo, in quo veterum et recentiorum interpretum cogitata præcipua expenduntur; genuinus sensus ad priscum linguæ genium indagatur, atque ex filo, et nexu universo, argumenti nodus intricatissimus evolvitur.* Curavit et editit, ALBERTUS SCHULTENS. *Lugd. Batav.* 1737. The same work abridged by Richard Grey. London, 1741, 8; and a more full abridgment, Halae, 1773, 1774, 8. This great work of Schultens on Job deserves the first place, on many accounts, in the list of those illustrative of this book. It is the most elaborate commentary which has been published, and contains a full statement of the opinions which have been entertained by critics on different parts of the work. Schultens brought to the interpretation of the book of Job a more accurate and extensive knowledge of the Hebrew and Arabic than was possessed by any one who preceded him in this department of labor. The leading faults of the work are, a too minute and tedious detail of the opinions of other commentators, amounting in many instances to a statement of more than twenty opinions on the meaning of a verse or phrase, and, in determining the meaning of Hebrew words, too great a proneness to rely on etymological conjectures.

*Liber Jobi in versiculas metricè divisus, cum versione Alberti Schultens Notisque ex ejus Commentario excerptis.* Richard Grey. London, 1741.

Sigmund Jacob Baumgartens *Auslegung des Buchs Hiob.* Halle, 1740.

Recht beleuchtetes Buch Hiobs, mit vielen dabey gemachten neuen Entdeckungen, nöthigen Anmerkungen und erbaulichen Nutzenwendungen. Herausgegeben von Jacob Koch. 1743, 1744, 1747.

*Kleine Geographisch-historische Abhandlungen zur Erläuterung einiger Stellen Mosis und vornehmlich des ganzen Buchs Hiob.* von Jac. Koch. 1747.

Costard's *Observations on the Book of Job.* 1747, 8vo.

*A Dissertation on the Book of Job, &c., by John Garnett, D.D.,*



quarto, London, 1749. According to Garnett, the book of Job is a drama, or allegory; the Babylonish captivity is the main subject of the allegory; the three friends who came to visit Job are the children of Edom coming to condole with the Hebrews in their captivity. The work is of very little value.

Das richtige Gericht in dem kurz und verständlich erklärten, übersetzten und zergliederten Buch Hiob u. s. w. durch Christoph Friedrich Oetinger. 1743.

Elihu; or, An Inquiry into the principal Scope and Design of the Book of Job, by Walter Hodges, D.D. London, quarto, 1750. According to Dr. Hodges, the book of Job relates to patriarchal times, and the design is to give a summary of the patriarchal religion. The particular purpose of the book, according to the view of this author, is, to reveal and establish the doctrine of *justification*. Job was a type of the Saviour, and by Job's friends being directed to offer sacrifices for themselves, is "intimated that each national church ought to have an independent power in such matters." In the opinion of this author, Elihu was the Son of God himself! The nature and value of the work may be easily seen from these views. The author was a divine of the Hutchinsonian school.

The Book of Job, with a Paraphrase from the third verse of the third chapter to the seventh verse of the forty-second chapter. By Leonard Chappelow, B.D., Arabic Professor. Cambridge, 1752. "A mere paraphrase, verbose, and without annotations."

Observationes Miscellanæ in Librum Job, etc., by David Renat. Bouillier. Amsterdam, 1758.

The Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated, by Bishop Warburton. 1758. In this great work there is an examination of the book of Job, which has attracted much attention, on account of the learning and talent of the author. The theory of Warburton is, that the book of Job is a drama; that it relates to the Jews in the time of the captivity; that it was written some time between the return and the thorough settlement of the Jews in their own land; that the drama is allegorical in its character; that the character of Job is designed to represent the Jewish people; that his wife is a representation of the heathen influence which led the Hebrews on their return to marry "strange wives;" that the three friends of Job represent the three capital enemies of the Jews who hindered their efforts to rebuild the temple on their return from Babylon, Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem; that under the character of Elihu the writer or author of the poem is himself designated. Div. Lega. B. vi. § 2. After the view which Bishop Warburton gives of the book of Job, there is more real point and force than he himself intended in what he says in a letter to his friend Dr. Hurd. "Poor Job! it was his eternal fate to be persecuted by his friends. His

three friends passed sentence of condemnation upon him, and he has been executed in effigy ever since. He was first bound to the stake by a long catena of Greek Fathers; then tortured by Pineda; then strangled by Caryl; and afterwards cut up by Wesley and anatomized by Garnett. I only acted the tender part of his wife, and was for making short work with him. But he was ordained, I think, by a fate like that of Prometheus, to lie still upon his dung-hill, and to have his brains sucked out by owls."

An Essay towards a new English version of the Book of Job from the original Hebrew, with a Commentary, and some account of his life. By Thomas Heath, Esq., of Exeter. Quarto. London, 1756. There is little in this work that can now be regarded as of value. The knowledge of Hebrew by the author was quite limited, and the notes throw little light on the meaning of the text.

A Critical Dissertation on the Book of Job, by Charles Peters, A.M. London, 1751, quarto. This work is designed particularly to examine the theory of Bishop Warburton; to vindicate the antiquity of the book; to show that the passage in ch. xix. 25—27 refers to the resurrection and the future judgment; and that the doctrine of the future state was the popular belief among the Hebrews. It is a work of considerable learning and value. It contains much valuable matter, though all its reasonings may not be satisfactory.

Paraphrastische Erklärung des Buchs Hiob, von Joh. Fried. Bahrdt. Leips. 1764.

Das Buch Hiob, in einer poetischen Uebersetzung nach Schulzens Erklärung mit Anmerkungen, von Simon Grynaeus. 1767.

Joh. Dav. Cube poetische und prosaische Uebersetzung des Buchs Hiob. Berlin, 1769.

Paul Bauldri, Critical Remarks on Job.

Kurze doch gründliche Erklärung des Buchs Hiob, u. s. w. von Joh. Georg. Meintel. Nürnberg, 1771.

Velthusen, Exercitationes Criticæ in Jobum, cap. xix. 1772, 12mo.

Scott's Book of Job in English verse, with Notes. 1773, 8vo. A very valuable work." *Wemyss*.

Metaphraisi libri Jobi, sive Job metricus, vario carminis genere, rimo ejulans, post jubilans, interprete Jo. Georg. Meintel. 1775.

Versuch einer neuen poetischen Uebersetzung des Buches Hiob, u. s. w. von J. C. R. Eckermann. 1778.

Animadversiones in Librum Job. Scripsit Jas. Christ. Rud. Eckermann. Lubeck, 1779.

Jo. Christoph. Doederlin Scholia in libros vet. Testam. poeticas, Jobum, Psalmos, et tres Salomonis. Halle, 1779.

Joa. Jac. Reiske conjecturæ in Jobum et Proverbia Salomonis.

Leips. 1779. He takes great liberty with the Hebrew text, transposing, changing, or rejecting whole verses at pleasure.

Hiob, übersetzt von Dan. Gotthilf Moldenhawer. Leips. 1780.

Das Buch Hiob zum allgemeinen Gebrauch, von Heinr. Sander. Leips. 1780, 8vo.

Hiob, neu übersetzt mit Anmerkungen, von W. F. Hufnagel. 1781, 8vo.

Hiob, aus dem Hebräischen Original neu übersetzt, u. s. w. von Christ. Dav. Kessler. 1784, 8vo.

Hiob, aus dem Hebräischen Original neu übersetzt und mit erklärenden Anmerkungen versehen, zum allgemeinen Gebrauch, von Chr. Dan. Kessler. Tübingen, 1784, 8vo.

Greve, Ultima Capita Jobi. 1788, 4to.

Jobi, antiquissimi carminis hebraici, natura atque virtus. Script Car. Dav. Ilgen. Leips. 1789, 8vo.

Jobus, Proverbia Salomonis, etc. a Joh. Aug. Dathio. Halle, 1789, 8vo.

Job oversat [with brief critical and philological remarks], by And. Heins. In the Dutch language. Amsterdam, 1794. 8vo.

Het Boek Job, etc. [also in the Dutch language.] By Herrman Muntinghe. Amsterdam, 1794, 8vo.

Garden's improved version of the Book of Job. 1796, 8vo.

The same work translated into German by J. P. Berg. Leips. 1797, 8vo.

Hiob, übersetzt; ein Versuch von Samuel Christian Pape. Göttingen, 1797, 8vo.

Das Buch Hiob metrisch übersetzt. Ein Versuch von A. S. Block. Ratzeburg, 1799, 8vo.

Hiob, übersetzt von J. G. Eichhorn. Leips. 1800, 8vo. Neue verbesserte Ausgabe. Göttingen, 1824.

Exegetische und kritische versuche über die schwersten stellen des Buchs Hiob. Leips. 1801, 8vo.

Discourses and Dissertations on the Scriptural Doctrine of Atonement and Sacrifice. By William Magee, D.D. 1801. In this important work on the Atonement, there is a very valuable dissertation on the book of Job. Bishop Magee supposes that Moses was the author, or that it was written by Job himself, or by some contemporary, and that it fell into the hands of Moses, and was adopted by him as an important help to encourage the Israelites in their trials.

Die heilige Schrift des Alten Testaments, zweiten Theils. dritten Bandes zweite Hälfte, welche das Buch Hiob euthält. von D. Brentana und Th. A. Dereser. Frankfort, 1804, 8vo.

Hiob. Ein religiöses Gedicht Aus dem Hebräischen neu über-

setzt, geprüft und erläubert von Matthias Heinr. Stuhlmann. Hamburg, 1804, 8vo.

Stock's Book of Job; a new version, with Notes. 1805, 4to. See this work examined with great severity in Magee on the Atonement.

Pareau, Commentatio, &c. 1807, 8vo.

Das Buch Hiob, bearbeitet von Gaab. Tübingen, 1809, 8vo.

Die Schriften des Alten Testaments. Neu übersetzt von J. C. W. Augusti und W. M. L. de Wette. Dritter Band. Hiob. Heidelberg, 1809, 8vo.

Jobus Latine vertit, et annotatione perpetua, illustravit, Ern. Frid. Car. Rosenmüller, Ling. Arab. in Acad. Leips. Prof. Leips 1806. The commentary of Rosenmüller is, on the whole, probably the most valuable of all the expositions of this book. One who wishes to *explain* and *understand* the book of Job will find more valuable materials collected there than in any other of the commentaries. Nothing is passed over without an attempt at explanation; and nothing collected by his predecessors that would throw light on the meaning of the book, seems to have been unnoticed by him. For the most part, also, the exposition is distinguished by sound sense, by correct and sober views, as well as by eminent learning.

The Book of Job, translated by Eliz. Smith. 1810, 8vo. "This work was completed before the twenty-sixth year of the authoress, with little help except from Parkhurst's Lexicon, and the revision of her friend Dr. Randolph, who annexed to it a few critical notes. She left a fine example to her sex; and though self-taught, with little access to books, she left behind her some monuments of learning and piety calculated to make many blush for their own idleness."—*Wemyss*.

The Book of Job literally translated from the original Hebrew, and restored to its natural arrangement, with notes critical and illustrative; and an Introduction on its scene, scope, language, author, and object. By John Mason Good, F.R.S., &c. 1812. The "Introduction" by Dr. Good is very valuable. In the Notes there is much learning, but it is more extensive than accurate. The translation cannot be relied on as correct. The work, however, is a valuable contribution to sacred literature, and deserves a place in every theological library.

Das Buch Hiob aus dem Grundtext metrisch übersetzt und erläutert von J. Rud. Schärer. Bern, 1818, 8vo.

Bridel, Le Livre de Job. 1818, 8vo.

Hiob, für gebildete Leser bearbeitet von. C. G. A. Böckel. Berlin, 1821, 8vo.

Das Buch Hiob, aus dem Hebräischen metrisch übersetzt und durch kurze philologische Anmerkungen erläutert von L. F. Melsheimer. Mannheim, 1823.

Buch Hiob. Uebersetzung und Anslegung, von D. Friedrich Wilhelm Carl Umbreit, Professor an der Universität zu Heidelberg. Heidelberg, 1824, 8vo. This is the production of an acute and sharp-sighted critic. The translation is very accurate, and the Notes, though brief, are very valuable. The Introduction is less brief than is desirable, and the views maintained in it are not such as seem to me to be correct.

Middledorff, curæ Hexaplares in Jobum. 1837, 4to.

The Book of the Patriarch Job, translated from the original Hebrew, as nearly as possible, in the terms and style of the authorized English version, to which is prefixed an introduction on the History, Times, Country, Friends, and Book of the Patriarch, &c. By Samuel Lee, D.D., etc. London, 1837. This work is not what might have been expected from the learning and reputation of Prof. Lee. It abounds with Arabic learning, which is scattered with ostentatious profuseness through the volume, but which often contributes little to the elucidation of the text. It is designed for the critical scholar rather than the general reader.

A new translation of the Book of Job, with an Introduction, and Notes, chiefly explanatory. By George R. Noyes. Boston, 1838. This is an elegant and a very accurate translation. Dr. Noyes is understood to be a Unitarian, but neither in this work nor in the translation of Isaiah have I observed any attempt to accommodate the translation to the views of that denomination. His aim has evidently been to give the exact sense of the original, and this, so far as I can judge, has been accomplished with great accuracy. The Notes are very brief, but they are pithy and valuable. The Introduction is less valuable than the other parts of the work.

Job and his Times; or, a Picture of the Patriarchal Age during the period between Noah and Abraham, as regards the state of morality, arts and sciences, manners and customs, &c., and a new version of that most ancient poem, accompanied with Notes and Dissertations. The whole adapted to the English reader. By Thomas Wemyss, author of Biblical Gleanings, Symbolical Dictionary, and other works. London, 1839. This is designed to be a popular work. It is not so much of the nature of a commentary as a collection of fragments and brief essays on various topics referred to in the book of Job. It is chiefly valuable from its illustration of the religion of the time of Job, the arts and sciences, the manners and customs, &c. It lacks lucid arrangement, and furnishes comparatively little illustration of the difficulties of the text.

# GENERAL ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF JOB.

## PART FIRST.

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V. The close of the discussion, chs. xxxviii.—xli. 1—6

- (1.) The speech of the Almighty, chs. xxxviii.—xli.
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## PART THIRD.

THE CONCLUSION, IN PROSE, CH. XLII. 7—17.



# THE BOOK OF JOB.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER I.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

Brief history of Job; his piety and prosperity, vs. 1—5. The tribunal of the Almighty, and the assembling there of the sons of God. Satan appears among them, ver. 6. The inquiry of the Almighty of Satan where he had been, and his answer, ver. 7. His remark respecting the fidelity of Job, ver. 8. Satan insinuates that all his fidelity is the mere result of selfishness, produced by the favours that God had bestowed on him, and that if his blessings were taken away he would curse God to his face, vs. 10, 11. The Almighty consents to the trial of Job, only making it a condition that his person should not be touched, ver. 12, and Satan goes out from the presence of JEHOVAH to afflict Job. The calamities that came upon the family of Job, vs. 13—19. Job's deep affliction, but perfect resignation, vs. 20—22. ✓

**T**HERE was a man in the land of <sup>a</sup> Uz, whose name was

<sup>1</sup> Moses is thought to have wrote the Book of Job, whilst among the Midianites, B.C. 1520.  
<sup>a</sup> 1 Ch. 1. 17, 42. La. 4. 21.

### CHAPTER I.

*There was a man.* This has all the appearance of being a true history. Many have regarded the whole book as a fiction, and have supposed that no such person as Job ever lived. But the book opens with the appearance of reality; and the express declaration that there was such a man, the mention of his name and of the place where he lived, show that the writer meant to affirm that there was in fact such a man. On this question see the Introduction, § 1. ¶ *In the land of Uz.* On the question where Job lived, see also the Introduction, § 2. ¶ *Whose name was Job.* The name Job (Heb. יֹבִיט, Gr. Ἰωβ) means properly, according to Gesenius, *one persecuted*, from a root (יָבַט), meaning to be an enemy to any one, to persecute, to hate. The primary idea, according to Gesenius, is to be sought in breathing, blowing, or puffing at or upon any one, as expressive of anger or hatred, Germ. *Anschnauben*. Eichhorn (Einleit. § 638, 1,) supposes

Job; <sup>b</sup> and that man was perfect and upright, and one that <sup>c</sup> feared God, and eschewed evil.

<sup>b</sup> Eze. 14. 14, 20.

<sup>c</sup> Pr. 16. 6.

that the name denotes a man who turns himself penitently to God, from a sense of the verb still found in Arabic **أَبَّ** *to repent*. On this supposition, the name was given to him, because, at the close of the book, he is represented as exercising repentance for the improper expressions in which he had indulged during his sufferings. The verb occurs only once in the Hebrew Scriptures, Ex. xxiii. 22: "But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak, then *I will be an enemy* (אֶבְיט) *unto thine enemies* (אֶבְיטְהֶם)." The participle יֹבֵיט *Oyēb* is the common word to denote an enemy in the Old Testament. Ex. xv. 6, 9; Lev. xxi. 25; Num. xxxv. 23; Deut. xxxii. 27, 42; Ps. vii. 5; viii. 2; xxxi. 8; Lam. ii. 4, 5; Job, xiii. 24; xxvii. 7; xxxiii. 10, *et sæpe al.* If this be the proper meaning of the word *Job*, then the name would seem to have been given him by anticipation, or by common consent, as a much persecuted man. Significant names were very common among the



Hebrews—given either by anticipation (see Notes on Isa. viii. 18), or subsequently, to denote some leading or important event in the life. Comp. Gen. iv. 1, 2, 25, v. 29; 1 Sam. i. 20. Such, too, was the case among the Romans, where the *agnomen* thus bestowed became the appellation by which the individual was best known. Cicero thus received his name from a wart which he had on his face, resembling a *vetch*, and which was called by the Latins, *cicer*. Thus also Marcus had the name *Ancus*, from the Greek word *αγκών*, *ancon*, because he had a crooked arm; and thus the names Africanus, Germanicus, &c., were given to generals who had distinguished themselves in particular countries. See Univer. His. Anc. Part. ix. 619, ed. 8vo, Lond. 1779. In like manner it is possible that the name *Job* was given to the Emir of Uz by common consent, as the man much persecuted or tried, and that this became afterwards the appellation by which he was best known. The name occurs once as applied to a son of Issachar, Gen. xlv. 13, and in only two other places in the Bible except in this book; Ezek. xiv. 14; James, v. 11.

¶ *And that man was perfect* (תָּמַם). The LXX have greatly expanded this statement, by giving a paraphrase instead of a translation. "He was a man who was true (ἀληθινός), blameless (ἄμειπτος), just (δικαίος), pious (θεοσεβής), abstaining from every evil deed." Jerome renders it, *simplex* — *simple*, or *sincere*. The Chaldee, תָּמַם, *complete, finished, perfect*. The idea seems to be, that his piety, or moral character, was *proportionate*, and was *complete in all its parts*. He was a man of integrity in all the relations of life—as an Emir, a father, a husband, a worshipper of God. Such is properly the meaning of the word תָּמַם *tām*, as derived from תָּמַם *tāmām*, *to complete, to make full, perfect or entire, or to finish*. It denotes that in which there is no part lacking to complete the whole—as in a watch in which no wheel is wanting. Thus he was not merely upright as an Emir, but he was pious towards God; he was not

merely kind to his family, but he was just to his neighbors and benevolent to the poor. The word is used to denote integrity as applied to the heart, Gen. xx. 5: בְּהֹנְקֵי לִבִּי, "In the honesty, simplicity, or sincerity of my heart (see the margin), have I done this." So 1 Kings, xxii. 34. "One drew a bow בְּיָמֵי in the simplicity [or perfection] of his heart;" i. e. without any evil intention. Comp. 2 Sam. xv. 11; Prov. x. 9. The proper notion, therefore, is that of simplicity, sincerity, absence from guile or evil intention, and completeness of parts in his religion. That he was a man absolutely sinless, or without any propensity to evil, is disproved alike by the spirit of complaining which he often evinces, and by his own confession, ch ix. 20:

If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me;

If I say I am perfect, it shall prove me perverse.

So also ch. xlii. 5, 6:

I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear,  
But now mine eye seeth thee;  
Wherefore I abhor myself,  
And repent in dust and ashes.

Comp. Eccl. vii. 20. ¶ *And upright*. The word יָשָׁר *yāshār*, from יָשָׁר *yashār*, to be straight, is applied often to a road which is straight, or to a path which is level or even. As here used it means upright or righteous. Comp. Ps. xi. 7; xxxvii. 14; Deut. xxxii. 4; Ps. xxxiii. 4. ¶ *And one that feared God*. Religion in the Scriptures is often represented as the fear of God. Prov. i. 7, 29; ii. 5; iii. 13; xiv. 26, 27; Isa. xi. 2; Acts, ix. 31, *et sæpe al.* ¶ *And eschewed evil*. "And departed from (פָּרַק) evil." Sept. "Abstaining from every evil thing." These then are the four characteristics of Job's piety—he was sincere, upright, a worshipper of God, and one who abstained from all wrong. These are the essential elements of true religion everywhere; and the whole statement in the book of Job shows that he was, though not absolutely free from the sins which cleave to our nature, eminent in each of these things.

2 And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

3 His<sup>1</sup> substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thou-

<sup>1</sup> or, cattle.

2. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. The same number was given to him again after these were lost, and his severe trials had been endured. See ch. xlii. 13. Of his second family the names of the daughters are mentioned, ch. xlii. 14. Of his first, it is remarkable that neither the names of his wife, his sons, nor his daughters, are recorded. The Chaldee, however, on what authority is unknown, says, that the name of his wife was דִּנְהָ *Dinah*, ch. ii. 9.

3. His substance. Marg. or cattle. The word here used (רֶקֶן) is derived from רָקַן, *kânâh*, to gain or acquire, to buy or purchase, and properly means anything acquired or purchased—property, possessions, riches. The wealth of nomadic tribes, however, consisted mostly in flocks and herds, and hence the word in the Scriptures signifies, almost exclusively, property in cattle. The word, says Gesenius, is used *strictly* to denote sheep, goats, and neat cattle, excluding beasts of burden (comp. Gr. κτήνος, *herd*, used here by the LXX), though sometimes the word includes asses and camels, as in this place. ¶ *Seven thousand sheep.* In this verse we have a description of the wealth of an Arab ruler or chief, similar to that of those who are at this day called *Emirs*. Indeed, the whole description in the book is that which is applicable to the chief of a tribe. The possessions referred to in this verse would constitute no inconsiderable wealth anywhere, and particularly in the nomadic tribes of the East. Land is not mentioned as a part of his wealth; for among nomadic tribes living by pasturage, the right to the soil in fee simple is not claimed by individuals, the right of pasturage or a temporary possession being all that is needed. For the same reason, and

sand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great<sup>2</sup> household; so that this man was the greatest of all the<sup>3</sup> men of the east.

<sup>2</sup> or, husbandry.

<sup>3</sup> sons.

from the fact that their circumstances require them to live in moveable tents, houses are not mentioned as a part of the wealth of this Emir. To understand this book, as well as most of the books of the Old Testament, it is necessary for us to lay aside our notions of living, and transfer ourselves in imagination to the very dissimilar customs of the East.—The Chaldee has made a very singular explanation of this verse, which must be regarded as the work of fancy, but which shows the character of that version: "And his possessions were seven thousand sheep—a thousand for each of his sons; and three thousand camels—a thousand for each of his daughters; and five hundred yoke of oxen—for himself; and five hundred she-asses—for his wife." ¶ *And three thousand camels.* Camels are well known beasts of burden, extensively used still in Arabia. The Arabs employed these animals anciently in war, in their caravans, and for food. They are not unfrequently called "ships of the desert," particularly valuable in arid plains, because they go many days without water. They carry from three to five hundred pounds, in proportion to the distance which they have to travel. Providence has adapted the camel with wonderful wisdom to sandy deserts, and in all ages the camel must be an invaluable possession there. The driest thistle and the barest thorn is all the food that he requires, and this he eats while advancing on his journey without stopping or causing a moment's delay. As it is his lot to cross immense deserts where no water is found, and where no dews fall, he is endowed with the power of laying in a store of water that will suffice him for days—Bruce says for thirty days. To effect this, nature has provided large reservoirs or stomachs within him, where the water is kept

pure, and from which he draws at pleasure as from a fountain. No other animal is endowed with this power, and were it not for this, it would be wholly impracticable to cross those immense plains of sand. The Arabians, the Persians, and others, eat the flesh of camels, and it is served up at the best tables in the country. One of the ancient Arab poets, whose hospitality grew into a proverb, is reported to have killed yearly, in a certain month, ten camels every day, for the entertainment of his friends. In regard to the hardihood of camels, and their ability to live on the coarsest fare, Burckhardt has stated a fact which may furnish an illustration. In a journey which he made from the country south of the Dead Sea to Egypt, he says, "During the whole of this journey, the camels had no other provender than the withered shrubs of the desert, my dromedary excepted, to which I gave a few handfuls of barley each evening." Trav. in Syria, p. 451. Comp. Bruce's Travels, vol. iv. p. 596. Niebuhr, Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien, 1 Band, s. 215. Sandys, p. 138. Harmer's Obs. iv. 415, ed. Lond. 1808, 8vo; and Rob. Cal. ¶ *And five hundred yoke of oxen.* The fact that Job had so many oxen, implies that he devoted himself to the cultivation of the soil as well as to keeping flocks and herds. Comp. ver. 14. So large a number of oxen would constitute wealth anywhere. ¶ *And five hundred she asses.* Bryant remarks (Observations, p. 61), that a great part of the wealth of the inhabitants of the East often consisted of she-asses, the males being few and not held in equal estimation. She-asses are early mentioned as having been in common use to ride on; Num. xxii. 23; Judges, v. 10; 2 Kings, iv. 24 (Hebrew). One reason why the ass was chosen in preference to the horse, was, that it subsisted on so much less than that animal, there being no animal except the camel that could be so easily kept as the ass. She-asses were also regarded as the most valuable, because, in traversing the deserts of the country, they would furnish travellers with milk. It is remarkable that *cows* are not mentioned expressly in this enumeration of the articles of Job's

wealth, though *butter* is referred to by him subsequently as having been abundant in his family, ch. xxix. 6. It is possible, however, that *cows* were included as a part of the "five hundred yoke of בָּקָר, *Bākār*," here rendered "oxen;" but which would be quite as appropriately rendered *cattle*. The word is in the common gender, and is derived from בָּקַע, in Arab., to cleave, to divide, to lay open, and hence to plough, to cleave the soil. It denotes properly the animals used in ploughing; and it is well known that cows are employed as well as oxen for this purpose in the East. See Judges, xiv. 18; Hos. iv. 16. Comp. Deut. xxxii. 14, where the word בָּקָר, *Bākār*, is used to denote a cow—"milk of *kine*," Gen. xxxiii. 13, (Heb.) ¶ *And a very great household.* Marg. *husbandry*. The Hebrew word here (עֲבָדָה) is ambiguous. It may denote service rendered, xxxiv. 25, work, or the servants who performed it. Comp. Gen. xxvi. 14, Marg. The LXX render it ὑπηρεσία, *Aquila*, δουλεία; and Symmachus, *oikēria*; all denoting *service*, or *servitude*, or that which pertained to the domestic service of a family. The word refers doubtless to those who had charge of his camels, his cattle, and of his husbandry. See ver. 15. It is not implied by the word here used, nor by that in ver. 15, that they were *slaves*. They may have been, but there is nothing to indicate this in the narrative. The LXX add to this, as if explanatory of it, "and his works were great in the land." ¶ *So that this man was the greatest.* Was possessed of the most wealth, and was held in the highest honor. ¶ *Of all the men of the East.* Marg. as in Heb. *sons*. The sons of the East denote those who lived in the East. The word *East* (מִזְרָח) is commonly employed in the Scriptures to denote the country which lies east of Palestine. For the places intended here, see Intro. § 2, (3.) It is of course impossible to estimate with accuracy the exact amount of the value of the property of Job. Compared with many persons in modern times, indeed, his possessions would not be regarded as

## 4 And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day;

constituting very great riches. The Editor of the "Pictorial Bible" supposes that, on a fair estimate, his property might be considered as worth from thirty to forty thousand pounds sterling—equivalent to some two hundred thousand dollars. In this estimate the camel is reckoned as worth about forty-five dollars, the oxen as worth about five dollars, and the sheep at a little more than one dollar, which it is said are about the average prices now in Western Asia. Prices, however, fluctuate much from one age to another; but at the present day such possessions would be regarded as constituting great wealth in Arabia. The value of the property of Job may be estimated from this fact, that he had almost half as many camels as constituted the wealth of a Persian king in more modern times. Chardin says, "as the king of Persia in the year 1676 was in Mesandera, the Tartars fell upon the camels of the king, and took away three thousand of them, which was to him a great loss, for he had only seven thousand."—Rosenmüller, *Morgenland*, *in loc.* The condition of Job we are to regard as that of a rich Arabic Emir, and his mode of life as between the nomadic pastoral life and the settled manner of living in communities like ours. He was a princely shepherd, and yet he was devoted to the cultivation of the soil. It does not appear, however, that he claimed the right of the soil in *fee simple*, nor is his condition inconsistent with the supposition that his residence in any place was regarded as temporary, and that all his property might be easily removed. "He belonged to that condition of life which fluctuated between that of the wandering shepherd and that of a people settled in towns. That he resided, or had a residence, in a town is obvious; but his flocks and herds evidently pastured in the deserts, between which and the town his own time was probably divided. He differed from the Hebrew patriarchs chiefly in this, that he did not so much wander about 'without any certain dwelling-place.' This mixed condition of life, which is

still frequently exhibited in Western Asia, will, we apprehend, account sufficiently for the diversified character of the allusions and pictures which the book contains—to the pastoral life and the scenes and products of the wilderness; to the scenes and circumstances of agriculture; to the arts and sciences of settled life and of advancing civilization."—*Pict. Bib.* It may serve somewhat to illustrate the different ideas in regard to what constituted wealth in different countries, to compare this statement respecting Job with a remark of Virgil respecting an inhabitant of ancient Italy, whom he calls the most wealthy among the Ausonian farmers:—

"Seniorque Galesus,  
Dum paci medium se offert, justissimus unus  
Qui fuit, Ausonisque olim ditissimus arvis:  
Quinque greges illi balantum, quina redibant  
Armenta, et terram centum vertebat aratris."  
ÆN. vii. 535—539.

"Among the rest, the rich Galesus lies;  
A good old man, while peace he preached in  
vain,  
Amid the madness of the unruly train:  
Five herds, five bleating flocks, his pasture  
filled,  
His lands a hundred yoke of oxen tilled."  
DRYDEN.

4. And his sons went and feasted in their houses. Dr. Good renders this, "and his sons went to hold a banquet house." Tindal renders it, "made bankettes." The Hebrew means, they went and made "a house-feast;" and the idea is, that they gave an entertainment in their dwellings, in the ordinary way in which such entertainments were made. The word here used (שָׂתוּהוּ) is derived from שָׁתָה, *shâthâh*, to drink; and then to drink together, to banquet. Schultens supposes that this was merely designed to keep up the proper familiarity between the different branches of the family, and not for purposes of revelry and dissipation; and this seems to accord with the view of Job. He, though a pious man, was not opposed to it, but he apprehended merely that they might have sinned in their hearts, *ver.* 5. He knew the danger, and hence he was more assiduous in imploring for them the divine guardianship. ¶ Every

and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

5 And it was so, when the days of *their* feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in

*one his day.* In his proper turn, or when his day came round. Perhaps it refers only to their birth-days. See ch. iii. 1, where the word "day" is used to denote a birth-day. In early times the birth-day was observed with great solemnity and rejoicing. Perhaps in this statement the author of the Book of Job means to intimate that his family lived in entire harmony, and to give a picture of his domestic happiness strongly contrasted with the calamities which came upon his household. It was a great aggravation of his sufferings that a family thus peaceful and harmonious was wholly broken up.—The Chaldee adds, "until seven days were completed," supposing that each one of these feasts lasted seven days, a supposition by no means improbable, if the families were in any considerable degree remote from each other. ¶ *And sent and called for their three sisters.* This also may be regarded as a circumstance showing that these occasions were not designed for revelry. Young men, when they congregate for dissipation, do not usually invite their *sisters* to be with them; nor do they usually desire the presence of virtuous females at all. The probability, therefore, is, that this was designed as affectionate and friendly family intercourse. In itself there was nothing wrong in it, nor was there necessarily any danger; yet Job felt it *possible* that they might have erred and forgotten God, and hence he was engaged in more intense and ardent devotion on their account; ver. 5.

5. *And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about.* Dr. Good renders this, "as the days of such banquets returned." But this is not the idea intended. It is, when the banquets had gone round as in a circle through all the families, *then* Job sent and sanc-

tified them. It was not from an anticipation that they *would* do wrong, but it was from the apprehension that they *might* have sinned. The word rendered "were gone about" (הקפּוּ) means properly to join together, and then to move round in a circle, to revolve, as festivals do. See Notes on Isaiah, xxix. 1: "Let the festivals go round." Here it means that the days of their banqueting had gone round the circle, or had gone round the several families. Sept. "When the days of the entertainment (or drinking, πόρου) were finished." A custom of feasting similar to this prevails in China. "They have their fraternities which they call the brotherhood of the months; this consists of months according to the number of days therein, and in a circle they go abroad to eat at one another's houses by turns. If one man has not conveniences to receive the fraternity in his own house, he may provide for them in another; and there are many public houses well furnished for this purpose." See Semedo's History of China, i. ch. 13, as quoted by Burder in Rosenmüller's Morgenland, *in loc.* ¶ *That Job sent.* Sent for them, and called them around him. He was apprehensive that they might have erred, and he took every measure to keep them pure, and to maintain the influence of religion in his family. ¶ *And sanctified them.* This expression, says Schultens, is capable of two interpretations. It may either mean that he prepared them by various lustrations, ablutions, and other ceremonies, to offer sacrifice; or that he offered sacrifices for the purpose of procuring expiation for sins which they might actually have committed. The former sense, he remarks, is favored by the use of the word in Ex. xix. 10, 1 Sam. xvi. 5, where the word means, to prepare them-

d Le. 24. 15, 16. <sup>1</sup> *all the days.*

seives by aolutions to meet God and to worship him. The latter sense is demanded by the connexion. Job felt as every father should feel in such circumstances, that there was reason to fear that God had not been remembered as he ought to have been, and he was therefore more fervent in his devotions, and called them around him, that their own minds might be affected in view of his pious solicitude. What father is there who loves God, and who feels anxious that his children should also, who does not feel special solicitude if his sons and his daughters are in a situation where successive days are devoted to feasting and mirth? The word here rendered *sanctified* (שׁקל) means, properly, to be pure, clean, holy; in Pihel, the form used here, to make holy, to sanctify, to consecrate, as a priest; and here it means, that he took measures to make them holy, on the apprehension that they had sinned; that is, he took the usual means to procure for them forgiveness. The LXX render it *ἐκαθάριζεν*, he purified them. ¶ *And rose up early in the morning.* For the purpose of offering his devotions, and procuring for them expiation. It was customary in the patriarchal times to offer sacrifice early in the morning. See Gen. xxii. 3; Ex. xxxii. 6. ¶ *And offered burnt offerings.* Heb., “and caused to ascend;” that is, by burning them so that the smoke ascended towards heaven. The word rendered *burnt offerings* (עֹלָה) is from עָלָה, *áláh*, to ascend (the word used here and rendered “*offered*”), and means that which was made to ascend—to wit, by burning. It is applied in the Scriptures to a sacrifice that was wholly consumed on the altar, and answers to the Greek word *ὁλόκαυστον*, *Holocaust*. See Notes on Isa. i. 11. Such offerings in the patriarchal times were made by the father of a family, officiating as priest in behalf of his household. Thus Noah officiated, Gen. viii. 20; and thus also Abraham acted as the priest to offer sacrifice, Gen. xii. 7, 8, xiii. 18, xxii. 13. In the earliest times, and among heathen nations, it was supposed that pardon might be procured for sin by offering sacrifice. In

Homer there is a passage which remarkably corresponds with the view of Job before us; Il. ix. 620:

“The gods (the great and only wise)  
Are moved by offerings, vows, and sacrifice;  
Offending man their high compassion wins,  
And daily prayers atone for daily sins.”

POPE.

¶ According to the number of them all. Sons and daughters. Perhaps an additional sacrifice for each one of them. The LXX render this, “according to their numbers, καὶ μόσχον ἓνα πρὸς ἁμαρτίας περὶ τῶν ψυχῶν αὐτῶν—a young bullock for sin [or a sin-offering] for their souls.” ¶ *It may be that my sons have sinned.* He had no positive or certain proof of it. He felt only the natural apprehension which every pious father must, that his sons might have been overtaken by temptation, and perhaps, under the influence of wine, might have been led to speak reproachfully of God, and of the necessary restraints of true religion and virtue. ¶ *And cursed God in their hearts.* The word here rendered *curse* is that which is usually rendered *bless* (בָּרַךְ). It is not a little remarkable that the same word is used in senses so directly opposite as to *bless* and to *curse*. Dr. Good contends that the word should be always rendered *bless*, and so translates it in this place, “peradventure my sons may have sinned, *nor* blessed God in their hearts,” understanding the ו (Vav) as a disjunctive or negative participle. So too in ch. ii. 9, rendered in our common translation, “curse God and die,” he translates it, “blessing God and dying.” But the interpretation which the connexion demands is evidently that of cursing, renouncing, or forgetting; and so also it is in ch. ii. 9. This sense is still more obvious in 1 Kings, xxi. 10: “Thou didst *blaspheme* (בָּרַךְ) God and the king.” So also ver. 13 of the same chapter—though here Dr. Good contends that the word should be rendered *bless*, and that the accusation was, that Naboth *blessed* or worshipped the gods, even Moloch—where he supposes the word מֶלֶךְ *mēlēch*, should be pointed מֶלֶךְ, and read *Molech*. But the difficulty is not removed by this, and after all it is

probable that the word here, as in ch. ii. 9, means to *curse*. So it is understood by nearly all interpreters. The Vulgate, indeed, renders it, singularly enough, "Lest perhaps my sons have sinned, and have blessed God (et benedixerint Deo) in their hearts." The LXX, "Lest perhaps my sons in their mind have thought evil towards God," —κακά ἐνενόησαν πρὸς Θεόν. The Chaldee, "Lest my sons have sinned and provoked JEHOVAH (וְעִירְּוּ אֱלֹהֵי) in their hearts." Assuming that this is the sense of the word here, there are three ways of accounting for the fact that the same word should have such opposite significations. (1.) One is that proposed by Taylor (Concor.), that pious persons of old regarded blasphemy as so abominable that they abhorred to express it by the proper name, and that therefore, by an *euphemism*, they used the term *bless* instead of *curse*. But it should be said that nothing is more common in the Scriptures than words denoting cursing and blasphemy. The word אָלַח, *ālāh*, in the sense of cursing or execrating, occurs frequently. So the word חָלַהּ, *ghādhāph*, means to blaspheme, and is often used; 2 Kings, xix. 6, 22; Isa. xxxvii. 6, 23; Ps. xlii. 17. Other words also were used in the same sense, and there was no necessity of using a mere *euphemism* here. (2.) A second mode of accounting for this double use of the word is, that this was the common term of salutation between friends at meeting and parting. It is then supposed to have been used in the sense of the English phrase *to bid farewell to*. And then, like that phrase, to mean, *to renounce*, *to abandon*, *to dismiss from the mind*, *to disregard*. The words χαίρειν in Greek, and *valere* in Latin, are used in this way. This explanation is suggested by Schultens, and is adopted by Rosenmüller and Noyes, who refer to the following places as parallel instances of the use of the word. Virg. Ecl. 8, 58. *Vivite sylvæ*—a form, says the Annotator on Virgil (Delphin), of bidding farewell to, like the Greek χαίρειν, *gaudete*—"a form used against those whom we reject with hatred, and wish to depart." Thus Catull. 11, 17 :

Cum suis vivat, valeatque mœchis. So Æsch. Agam. 581 :

Καὶ πολλὰ χαίρειν ξυμφοραῖς καταξῷ.

Thus Plut. Dion. p. 975. So Cicero, in a letter to Atticus (viii. 8), in which he complains of the disgraceful flight of Pompey, applies to him a quotation from Aristophanes: πολλὰ χαίρειν εἰπὼν τῷ καλῷ—"bidding farewell to honor, he fled to Brundisium." Comp. Ter. And. iv. 2. 14. Cicero de Nat. Deor. 1. 44. According to this interpretation, it means, that Job apprehended they had renounced God in their hearts, i. e., had been unmindful of him, and had withheld from him the homage which was due.—This is plausible; but the difficulty is in making out the use of this sense of the word in Hebrew. That the word was used as a mode of *parting salutation* among the Hebrews is undoubted. It was a solemn form of invoking the divine blessing when friends separated. Comp. Gen. xxviii. 3, xlvii. 10. But I find no use of the word where it is applied to separation in the sense of *renouncing*, or bidding farewell to in a *bad sense*; and unless some instances of this kind can be adduced, the interpretation is unsound, and though similar phrases are used in Greek, Latin, and other languages, it does not demonstrate that this use of the word obtained in the Hebrew. (3.) A third and more simple explanation is that which supposes that the original sense of the word was *to kneel*. This, according to Gesenius, is the meaning of the word in Arabic. So Castell gives the meaning of the word—"to bend the knees for the sake of honor;" that is, as an act of respect. So in Syriac, ܕܢܝܢܐ *Genua flexit, procubuit*. So ܕܢܝܢܐ *Genu*, the *knee*. Then it means to bend the knee for the purpose of invoking God, or worshipping. In Piel, the form used here, it means (1) to bless God, to celebrate, to adore; (2) to bless men—i. e., to *invoke* blessings on them; to greet or salute them—in the sense of invoking blessings on them when we meet them; 1 Sam. xv. 13; Gen. xlvii. 7; 2 Sam. vi. 20; or when we part from them; Gen. xlvii. 10; 1 Kings,

6 ¶ Now there was a day <sup>c</sup> when the sons of God came <sup>f</sup> to present themselves before the

*e c. 2. 1, &c. f 1 Kl. 22. 19. c. 38. 7.*

LORD, and <sup>1</sup> Satan came also among <sup>2</sup> them.

<sup>1</sup> the adversary. 1 Ch. 21. 1; Zec. 3. 1; Re. 12. 9, 10. <sup>2</sup> in the midst of them.

viii. 66; Gen. xxiv. 60; (3) to *invoke evil*, in the sense of *cursing others*. The idea is, that punishment or destruction is from God, and hence it is *imprecated* on others. In one word, the term is used, as derived from the general sense of kneeling, in the sense of *invoking* either blessings or curses; and then in the general sense of blessing or cursing. This interpretation is defended by Selden, *de jure Nat. et Gent. Lib. II. c. xi. p. 255*, and by Gesenius, *Lex*. The idea here is, that Job apprehended that his sons, in the midst of mirth, and perhaps revelry, had been guilty of irreverence, and perhaps of reproaching God inwardly for the restraints of virtue and piety.—What is more common in such scenes? What was more to be apprehended? ¶ *Thus did Job continually*. It was his regular habit whenever such an occasion occurred. He was unremitting in his pious care; and his solicitude lest his sons should have sinned never ceased—a beautiful illustration of the appropriate feelings of a pious father in regard to his sons. The Heb. is, “all day;” *i. e.*, at all times.

6. *Now there was a day*. Dr. Good renders this, “And the day came.” Tindal, “Now upon a time.” The Chaldee Paraphrast has presumed to specify the time, and renders it, “Now it happened in the day of judgment [or scrutiny, מִיּוֹם הַדִּיּוּן], in the beginning of the year, that hosts of angels came to stand in judgment before JEHOVAH, and Satan came.” According to this, the judgment occurred once a year, and a solemn investigation was had of the conduct even of the angels. In the Hebrew there is no intimation of the frequency with which this occurred, nor of the time of the year when it happened. The only idea is, that “the sons of God,” on a set or appointed day, came to stand before God, to give an account of what they had done, and to receive further orders in regard to what

they were to do.—This is evidently designed to introduce the subsequent events relating to Job. It is language taken from the proceedings of a monarch who had sent forth messengers or ambassadors on important errands through the different provinces of his empire, who now returned to give an account of what they had observed, and of the general state of the kingdom. Such a return would, of course, be made on a fixed day, when, in the language of the law, their report would be “returnable,” and when they would be required to give in an account of the state of the kingdom. If it be said that it is inconsistent with the supposition that this book was inspired, to suppose such a poetic fiction, I reply, (1.) That it is no more so than the parables of the Saviour, who often supposes cases, and states them as real occurrences, in order to illustrate some important truth. Yet no one was ever led into error by this (2.) It is in accordance with the language in the Scripture everywhere to describe God as a monarch seated on his throne, surrounded by his ministers, and sending them forth to accomplish important purposes in different parts of his vast empire. It is not absolutely necessary, therefore, to regard this as designed to represent an actual occurrence. It is one of the admissible ornaments of poetry;—as admissible as any other poetic ornament. To represent God as a king is not improper; and if so, it is not improper to represent him with the usual accompaniments of royalty,—surrounded by ministers, and employing angels and messengers for important purposes in his kingdom. This supposition being admitted, all that follows is merely *in keeping*, and is designed to preserve the verisimilitude of the conception.—This idea, however, by no means militates against the supposition that angels are in fact really employed by God in important pur-



poses in the government of his kingdom, nor that Satan has a real existence, and is permitted by God to employ an important agency in the accomplishment of his purposes towards his people. On this verse, however, see the Introduction, § 1. (3.) ¶ *The sons of God.* Angels. Comp. ch. xxxviii. 7. The whole narrative supposed that they were celestial beings. ¶ *Came to present themselves.* As having returned from their embassy, and to give an account of what they had observed and done. ¶ *Before the Lord.* Before JEHOVAH. On the meaning of this word, see Notes on Isa. i. 2. A scene remarkably similar to this is described in 1 Kings xxii. 19-23. JEHOVAH is there represented as "sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left." He inquires who would go and persuade Ahab that he might go up and fall at Ramoth Gilead? "And there came forth a spirit and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him" This he promised to do by being "a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets." ¶ *And Satan came also among them.* Marg. "The adversary" came "in the midst of them." On the general meaning of this passage, and the reasons why Satan is introduced here, and the argument thence derived respecting the age and authorship of the Book of Job, see Introduction, § iv. (4) The Vulgate renders this by the name *Satan*. The LXX, ὁ διάβολος—the devil, or the accuser. The Chaldee, שָׂטָן *Satan*. So the Syriac. Theodotion, ὁ ἀντικείμενος—the *adversary*. The word rendered *Satan* (שָׂטָן) is derived from שָׂטַן, *Satan*, to lie in wait, to be an adversary, and hence it means, properly, an adversary, an accuser. It is used to denote one who *opposes*, as in war (1 Kings xi. 14, 23, 25; 1 Sam. xxix. 4); one who is an adversary or an accuser in a court of justice (Ps. cix. 6), and one who stands in the way of another. Num. xxii. 22, "And the angel of JEHOVAH stood in the way for an adversary against him" (הַשָּׂטָן), to oppose him. It is then used, by way of eminence, to denote THE

*adversary*, and assumes the form of a proper name, and is applied to the great foe of God and man—the malignant spirit who seduces men to evil, and who accuses them before God. Thus in Zech. iii. 1, 2, "And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan." Comp. Rev. xii. 10, "Now is come salvation—for the accuser (ὁ κατήγορος—i.e., Satan, see ver. 9) of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."—The word does not often occur in the Old Testament. It is found in the various forms of a verb and a noun in only the following places. As a verb, in the sense of being an adversary, Ps. lxxi. 13; cix. 4, 20, 29; Zech. iii. 1; Ps. xxxviii. 20; as a noun, rendered *adversary*, and *adversaries*, 1 Kings v. 4; xi. 14, 22, 25; Num. xxii. 22, 32; 1 Sam. xxix. 4; 2 Sam. xix. 22; rendered *Satan*, 1 Chron. xxi. 1; Ps. cix. 6; Job i. 6, 7, 8, 9, 12; ii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7; Zech. iii. 2; and once rendered *an accusation*, Ezra iv. 6. It was a word, therefore, early used in the sense of an adversary or accuser, and was applied to any one who sustained this character, until it finally came to be used as a proper name, to denote, by way of eminence, the prince of evil spirits, as the adversary or accuser of men. An opinion has been adopted in modern times, by Herder, Eichhorn, Dathe, Ilgen, and some others, that the being here referred to by the name of Satan is not the malignant spirit, the enemy of God, the Devil, but is one of the sons of God, "a faithful, out too suspicious servant of JEHOVAH." According to this, God is represented as holding a council to determine the state of his dominions. In this council, Satan, a zealous servant of JEHOVAH, to whom had been assigned the honorable office of visiting different parts of the earth, for the purpose of observing the conduct of the subjects of JEHOVAH, makes his appearance on his return with others. Such was the piety of Job, that it had attracted the special attention of JEHOVAH, and he puts the

7 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord,

question to Satan, whether in his journey he had remarked this illustrious example of virtue. Satan, who, from what he has observed on earth, is supposed to have lost all confidence in the reality and genuineness of the virtue which man may exhibit, suggests that he doubts whether even Job serves God from a disinterested motive; that God had encompassed him with blessings, and that his virtue is the mere result of circumstances; and that if his comforts were removed he would be found as destitute of principle as any other man. Satan, according to this, is a suspicious minister of JEHOVAH, not a malignant spirit; he inflicts on Job only what he is ordered to inflict by God, and nothing because he is himself malignant. Of this opinion Gesenius remarks (*Lex.*), that it "is now universally exploded." An insuperable objection to this view is, that it does not accord with the character usually ascribed to Satan in the Bible, and especially that the disposition attributed to him in the narrative before us is wholly inconsistent with this view. He is a malignant being; an accuser; one delighting in the opportunity of charging a holy man with hypocrisy, and in the permission to inflict tortures on him, and who goes as far in producing misery as he is allowed—restrained from destroying him only by the express command of God.—In Arabic the word Satan is often applied to a serpent. Thus Gjahhari, as quoted by Schultens, says, "The Arabs call a serpent Satan, especially one that is conspicuous by its crest, head, and odious appearance." It is applied also to any object or being that is evil. Thus the Scholiast on Hariri, as quoted by Schultens also, says, "Everything that is obstinately rebellious, opposed, and removed from good, of genii, men, and beasts, is called Satan."—The general notion of an adversary and an opponent is found everywhere in the meaning of the word.—Dr. Good re-

and said, From going <sup>g</sup> to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

*g* Matt. 12. 43; 1 Pe. 5. 8.

marks on this verse, "We have here another proof that, in the system of patriarchal theology, the evil spirits, as well as the good, were equally amenable to the Almighty, and were equally cited, at definite periods, to answer for their conduct at his bar." Rosenmüller remarks well in this verse, "It is to be observed, that Satan, no less than the other celestial spirits, is subject to the government of God, and dependent on his commands (*comp. ch. ii. 1*), where Satan equally with the sons of God (בני אלהים) is said to present himself before God (יִתְקַבֵּץ, *i.e.* λειτουργεῖν) to minister. JEHOVAH uses the ministry of this demon [*hujus dæmonis*] to execute punishment, or when from any other cause it seemed good to him to send evil upon men. But he, although incensed against the race of mortals, and desirous of injuring, is yet described as bound with a chain, and never dares to touch the pious unless God relaxes the reins. Satan, in walking round the earth, could certainly attentively consider Job, but to injure him he could not, unless permission had been given him."

7. *And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou?* This inquiry does not appear to have been made as if it was improper that Satan should have appeared there, for no blame seems to have been attached to him for this. He came as a spirit that was subject to the control of JEHOVAH; he came with others, not to mingle in their society, and partake of their happiness, but to give an account of what he had done, and of what he had observed. The poetic idea is, that this was done periodically, and that *all* the spirits employed by JEHOVAH to dispense blessings to mortals, to inflict punishment, or to observe their conduct, came and stood before him. Why the inquiry is directed particularly to *Satan*, is not specified. Perhaps it is not meant that

8 And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou ' considered my servant Job, that *there is*

*' set thine heart on.*

there was any *special* inquiry made of him, but that, as he was to have so important an agency in the transactions which follow, the inquiry that was made of him only is recorded. In respect to the others, nothing occurred pertaining to Job, and their examination is not adverted to. Or it may be, that, as Satan was known to be malignant, suspicious, and disposed to think evil of the servants of God, the design was to direct his attention particularly to Job as an illustrious and indisputable example of virtue and piety.

¶ *From going to and fro in the earth.* Dr. Good renders this, "from roaming round." Noyes, "from wandering over."

The word which is here used (שָׁטַח) means, properly, (1,) to whip, to scourge, to lash; (2,) to row, *i. e.*, to lash the sea with oars; (3,) to run up and down, to go hither and thither, or to and fro, so as to lash the air with one's arms as with oars, and hence to travel over a land, or to go through it in order to see it, 2 Sam. xxiv. 2, 8. Dr. Good, in conformity with the interpretation proposed by Schultens, says, that "the word imports, not so much the act of going forwards and backwards, as of making a circuit or circumference; of going round about. The Hebrew verb is still in use among the Arabic writers, and in every instance implies the same idea of gyration or circumambulation." In Arabic, according to Castell, the

word سَط means, *to heat, to burn, to*

*cause to boil, to consume*: then to propel to weariness, as, *e. g.*, a horse, and then to make a circuit, to go about at full speed, to go with diligence, and activity. Thus in *Carnuso*, as quoted by Schultens, "a course made at one impulse to the goal is called שָׁט, *shot*. In 2 Sam. xxiv. 2, the word is used in the sense of passing around through different places for the purpose of taking a census. "Go now (*Marg. compass*)

none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

through all the tribes of Israel." In Num. xi. 8, it is applied to the Israelites going about to collect manna,—passing rapidly and busily in the places where it fell, for the purpose of gathering it. In Zech. iv. 10, it is applied to "the eyes of Jehovah," which are said to "run to and fro through the earth," *i. e.*, he surveys all things as one does whose eye passes rapidly from object to object. The same phrase occurs in 2 Chron. xvi. 9. In Jer. v. 9, it is applied to the action of a man passing rapidly through the streets of a city. "Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem." Comp. Jer. xlix. 3. From these passages it is clear that the idea is not that of going in a circuit or circle, but it is that of passing rapidly; of moving with alacrity and in a hurry; and it is not improbable that the *original* idea is that suggested in the Arabic of *heat*—and thence applied to a whip or scourge, because it produces a sensation like burning, and also to a rapid journey or motion, because it produces heat, or a glow. It means that Satan had been active and diligent in passing from place to place in the earth to survey it. The Chaldee adds to this, "to examine into the works of the sons of men." ¶ *And from walking.* That is, to investigate human affairs. On this verse, it is observed by Rosenmüller, that in the life of Zoroaster (see *Zendavesta*, by J. G. Kleukner, vol. iii. p. 11), the prince of the evil demons, the angel of death, whose name is *Eugremiosch*, is said to go far and near through the world for the purpose of injuring and opposing good men.

8. *Hast thou considered my servant Job.* Marg. *Set thine heart on.* The margin is a literal translation of the Hebrew. Schultens remarks on this, that it means more than merely to observe or to look at—since it is abundantly manifest from the following verses that Satan *had* attentively considered Job, and had been desirous of

9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

10 Hast not thou made an hedge <sup>h</sup> about him, and about

h Ps. 34. 7.

injuring him. It means, according to him, to set himself against Job, to fix the heart on him with an intention to injure him, and JEHOVAH means to ask whether Satan had done this. But it seems more probable that the phrase means, to consider *attentively*, and that God means to ask him whether he had carefully observed him. Satan is represented as having no confidence in human virtue, and as maintaining that there was none which would resist temptation, if presented in a form sufficiently alluring. God here appeals to the case of Job as a full refutation of this opinion. The trial which follows is designed to test the question whether the piety of Job was of this order. ¶ *That there is none like him in the earth.* That he is the very highest example of virtue and piety on earth. Or might not the word <sup>כ</sup>, *ki*, here be rendered *for*? "For there is none like him in the earth." Then the idea would be, not that he had considered *that* there was none like him, but God directs his attention to him *because* he was the most eminent among mortals. ¶ *A perfect and an upright man.* See Notes on ver. 1. The LXX translate this verse as they do ver. 1.

9. *Doth Job fear God for nought?* "Is his religion disinterested? Would not any one be willing to worship God in such circumstances?" The idea is, that there was nothing genuine about his piety; that religion could not be tried in prosperity; that Job had an abundant compensation for serving God, and that if the favors conferred on him were taken away, he would be like the rest of mankind. Much of the apparent virtue and religion of the world is the result of circumstances, and the question here proposed *may*, it is to be feared, be asked with great propriety of many professors of religion who are

his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance <sup>1</sup> is increased in the land.

<sup>1</sup> or, *cattle.*

rich; it *should* be asked by every professed friend of the Most High, whether his religion is not selfish and mercenary. Is it because God has blessed us with great earthly advantages? Is it the result of mere gratitude? Is it because he has preserved us in peril, or restored us from sickness? Or is it merely because we hope for heaven, and serve God because we trust he will reward us in a future world? All this may be the result of mere selfishness; and of all such persons it may be appropriately asked, "Do they fear God for nought?" True religion is not mere gratitude, nor is it the result of circumstances. It is the love of religion for its own sake—not for reward; it is because the service of God is right in itself, and not merely because heaven is full of glory; it is because God is worthy of our affections and confidence, and not merely because he will bless us—and this religion will live through all external changes, and survive the destruction of the world. It will flourish in poverty as well as when surrounded by affluence; on a bed of pain as well as in vigorous health; when we are calumniated and despised for our attachment to it, as well as when the incense of flattery is burnt around us, and the silvery tones of praise fall on our ear; in the cottage as well as the palace; on the pallet of straw as well as on the bed of down.

10. *Hast not thou made an hedge about him.* Dr. Good remarks, that to give the original word here its full force, it should be derived from the science of engineering, and be rendered, "Hast thou not raised a *palisado* about him?" The Hebrew word here used (<sup>חָסֵה</sup>) properly means to hedge; to hedge in or about; and hence to protect, as one is defended whose house or farm is *hedged* in either with a fence of thorns, or with

11 But put forth thine hand now, and touch<sup>i</sup> all that he hath,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>i</sup> c. 19. 21. <sup>1</sup> if he curse thee not.

an inclosure of stakes or palisades. The word in its various forms is used to denote, as a noun, *pricks in the eyes* (Num. xxxiii. 55); that is, that which would be like thorns; *barbed irons* (Job xli. 7), that is, the barbed iron used as a spear to take fish; and a hedge, and thorn hedge, Mic. vii. 4; Prov. xv. 19; Isa. v. 5. The idea here is that of making an inclosure around Job and his possessions, to guard them from danger. The LXX render it περιφραζας, to "make a defence around," to *circumvallate* or *inclose*, as a camp is in war. In the Syriac and Arabic it is rendered, "Hast thou not protected him with thy hand?" The Chaldee, "Hast thou protected him with thy word?" The LXX render the whole passage, "Hast thou not encircled the things which are without him" (τὰ ἔξω αὐτοῦ), i. e., the things abroad which belong to him, "and the things within his house?" The sense of the whole passage is, that he was eminently under the divine protection, and that God had kept himself, his family, and property, from plunderers, and that *therefore* he served and feared him. ¶ *Thou hast blessed the work of his hands.* Thou hast greatly prospered him. ¶ *And his substance is increased in the land.* His property, ver. 3. Marg. *cattle*. The word *increased* here by no means expresses the force of the original. The word פָּרַץ means, properly, to break, to rend; then to break or burst forth as waters do that have been pent up. 2 Sam. v. 20. Comp. Prov. iii. 10, "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out (פָּרַץ) with new wine;" i. e., thy wine-fats shall be so full that they shall overflow, or burst the barriers, and the wine shall flow out in abundance. The Arabians, according to Schultens, employ this word still to denote the mouth or *embouchure*—the most rapid part of a stream. So Golius, in proof of this, quotes from the Arabic writer, Gjahari, a couplet

and he will<sup>k</sup> curse thee to thy face.

<sup>k</sup> Is. 8. 21.

where the word is used to denote the mouth of the Euphrates:

"His rushing wealth o'erflowed him with its heaps;

So at its mouth (فراص) the mad Euphrates sweeps."

According to Schultens, the word denotes a place where a river bursts forth, and makes a new way by rending the hills and rocks asunder. In like manner, the flocks and herds of Job had burst, as it were, every barrier, and had spread like an inundation over the land. Comp. Gen. xxx. 43; 2 Chron. xxxi. 5; Ex. i. 1; Job xvi. 14.

11. *But put forth thine hand now.* That is, for the purpose of injuring him, and taking away his property. ¶ *And touch all that he hath.* Dr. Good renders this, "and smite." The Vulg. and the LXX, "touch." The Hebrew word used here (נָגַע) means, properly, to *touch*; then to touch any one with violence (Gen. xxvi. 11; Josh. ix. 19), and then, to smite, to injure, to strike. See Gen. xxxii. 26, 33; 1 Sam. vi. 9; Job xix. 21. Comp. Notes on Isa. liii. 4. Here it means, evidently, to smite or strike; and the idea is, that if God should take away the property of Job, he would take away his religion with it—and the trial was to see whether this effect would follow. ¶ *And he will curse thee to thy face.* He will do it openly and publicly.

The word rendered *curse* here (קָלַל) is the same as that used in ver. 5, and which is usually rendered *bless*. See Notes on ver. 5. Dr. Good contends that it should be rendered here "bless," and translates it as a question: "will he then, indeed, bless thee to thy face?" But in this he probably stands alone. The evident sense is, that Job would openly renounce God, and curse him on his throne; that all his religion was caused merely by his abundant prosperity, and was mere gratitude and selfishness; and that if his property were taken away, he would become the

12 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power, <sup>1</sup> only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

13 And there was a day <sup>1</sup> when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

<sup>1</sup> hand, Ge. 16. 6.

<sup>1</sup> Ec. 9. 12.

open and avowed enemy of him who was now his benefactor.

12. *All that he hath is in thy power.* Marg. as in Heb. *hand*. That is, all this is now committed to thee, for it is manifest that hitherto Satan had no power to injure even his property. He complained that God had made a hedge around all that Job possessed. Now it was all intrusted to him in order that he might make full trial of the faith of Job. The grant extended to his sons and daughters as well as to his property. ¶ *Only upon himself put not forth thine hand.* Job himself was not to be visited with sickness, nor was his life to be taken. The main accusation of Satan was, that Job was virtuous only because God encompassed him with so many blessings, and especially because he had endowed him with so much property. The trial, therefore, only required that it should be seen whether his piety was the mere result of these blessings. ¶ *So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.* That is, from the council which had been convened. See Notes on ver. 6.

13. *And there was a day.* That is, on the day in which the regular turn came for the banquet to be held in the house of the elder brother. Comp. Notes on ver. 4. ¶ *And drinking wine.* This circumstance is omitted in ver. 4. It shows that wine was regarded as an essential part of the banquet, and it was from its use that Job apprehended the unhappy results referred to in ver. 5.

14. *And there came a messenger unto Job.* Heb. מַלְאָכִי; the word usually rendered *angel*, appropriately rendered 'messenger' here. The word properly

14 And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them:

15 And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

means *one who is sent*. ¶ *The oxen were plowing.* Heb. *the cattle* (צֶמֶד), including not merely *oxen*, but probably also *cows*. See Notes on ver. 3. ¶ *And the asses.* Heb. מִנִּיָּה, *she-asses*. The *sex* is here expressly mentioned, and Dr. Good maintains that it should be in the translation. So it is in the LXX, αἱ θήλειαι ὄνοι. So Jerome, *asinæ*. The reason why the *sex* is specified is, that female asses, on account of their milk, were much more valuable than males. On this account they were preferred also for travelling. See Notes on ver. 3. ¶ *Beside them.* Heb. "By their hands," i. e., by their sides, for the Heb. יָד is often used in this sense. Comp. Notes on Isa. xxxiii. 21.

15. *And the Sabeans.* Heb. סַבְאִי, Vulg. *Sabæi*. The LXX give a paraphrase, καὶ ἰαζόντες οἱ αἰχμαλωτεύοντες ἤχμαλώτισαν, "And the plunderers coming, plundered them," or made them captive. On the situation of Sheba and Seba, see Notes on Isa. xliii. 3; xlv. 14; lx. 6. The people here referred to were, undoubtedly, inhabitants of some part of Arabia Felix. There are three persons of the name of Sheba mentioned in the Scriptures. (1.) A grandson of Cush, Gen. x. 7. (2.) A son of Joktan, Gen. x. 28. (3.) A son of Jokshan, the son of Abraham by Keturah.—*Calmet*. The Sheba here referred to was probably in the southern part of Arabia, and from the narrative it is evident that the Sabeans here mentioned were a predatory tribe. It is not improbable that these tribes were in the habit of wandering for the purposes of

16 While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said,<sup>1</sup> The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the

<sup>1</sup> or, a great fire.

plunder over the whole country, from the banks of the Euphrates to the outskirts of Egypt. The Bedawin Arabs of the present day resemble in a remarkable manner the ancient inhabitants of Arabia, and for many centuries the manners of the inhabitants of Arabia have not changed, for the habits of the Orientals continue the same from age to age. The Syriac renders this simply, "a multitude rushed upon them;" omitting the word *Sabean*. ¶ *Fell upon them.* With violence; or rushed unexpectedly upon them. This is the way in which the Arab tribes now attack the caravan, the traveller, or the village, for plunder. ¶ *And took them away.* As plunder. It is common now to make such sudden incursions, and to carry off a large booty. ¶ *They have slain the servants.* Heb. נַעֲרֵי, *the young men.* The word נַעֲר, *nāār*, properly means *a boy*, and is applied to an infant just born, Ex. ii. 6; Judg. xiii. 5, 7; or to a youth, Gen. xxxiv. 19; xli. 12. It came then to denote a servant or slave, like the Greek παῖς; Gen. xxxvii. 2; 2 Kings v. 20. Comp. Acts v. 6. So the word *boy* is often used in the Southern States of America to denote a slave. Here it evidently means the servants that were employed in cultivating the lands of Job, and keeping his cattle. There is no intimation that they were slaves. Jerome renders it *pueros, boys*; so the LXX, τοὺς παῖδας. ¶ *And I only am escaped alone.* By myself, לִּי. There is no other one with me. It is remarkable that the same account is given by each one of the servants who escaped, vers. 16, 17, 19. The Chaldee has given a very singular version of this—apparently from the desire of accounting for everything, and of mentioning the names of all the persons intended. "The oxen were ploughing, and Lilith, queen of Zamargad, suddenly rushed upon them, and carried them away."

sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

17 While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said,

16. *While he was yet speaking.* All this indicates the rapidity of the movement of Satan, and his desire to overwhelm Job with the suddenness and greatness of his calamities. The object seems to have been to give him no time to recover from the shock of one form of trial before another came upon him. If an interval had been given him he might have rallied his strength to bear his trials; but afflictions are much more difficult to be borne when they come in rapid succession. It is not a very uncommon occurrence, however, that the righteous are tried by the rapidity and accumulation as well as the severity of their afflictions. It has passed into a proverb that "afflictions do not come alone." ¶ *The fire of God.* Marg. *A great fire*; evidently meaning a flash of lightning, or a thunderbolt. The Hebrew is, "fire of God;" but it is probable that the phrase is used in a sense similar to the expression "cedars of God," meaning lofty cedars; or "mountains of God," meaning very high mountains. The lightning is probably intended. Comp. Num. xvi. 35. Note on Isa. xxix. 6. ¶ *From heaven.* From the sky, or the air. So the word heaven is often used in the Scriptures. See Notes on Matt. xvi. 1. ¶ *And hath burned up the sheep.* That lightning might destroy herds and men no one can doubt; though the fact of their being actually consumed or burnt up may have been an exaggeration of the much affrighted messenger. The narrative leads us to believe that these things were under the control of Satan, though by the permission of God; and his power over the lightnings and the winds (ver. 19) may serve to illustrate the declaration, that he is the "Prince of the power of the air," in Eph. ii. 2.

17. *The Chaldeans.* The LXX translate this οἱ ἵππεις, *the horsemen*. Why they thus expressed it is unknown. It

The Chaldeans made out three bands, and <sup>1</sup> fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea,

<sup>1</sup> rushed.

may be possible that the Chaldeans were supposed to be distinguished as horsemen, and were principally known as such in their predatory excursions. But it is impossible to account for all the changes made by the LXX in the text. The Syriac and the Chaldee render it correctly, *Chaldeans*. The Chaldeans (Heb. כַּשְׁדִּים *Kasdim*) were the ancient inhabitants of Babylonia. According to Vitringa (Com. in Isa. Tom. i. p. 412, c. xiii. 19), Gesenius (Comm. zu Isa. xxiii. 13), and Rosenmüller (Bib. Geog. 1, 2, p. 36 seq.), the Chaldees or Casdim were a warlike people, who originally inhabited the Carduchian mountains, north of Assyria, and the northern part of Mesopotamia. According to Xenophon (Cyrop. iii. 2, 7) the Chaldees dwelt in the mountains adjacent to Armenia, and they were found in the same region in the campaign of the younger Cyrus, and the retreat of the ten thousand Greeks. Xen. Anaba. iv. 3 4; v. 5, 9; viii. 8, 14. They were allied to the Hebrews, as appears from Gen. xxii. 22, where *Chesed* (כֶּסֶד whence *Casdim*), the ancestor of the people, is mentioned as a son of Nahor, and was consequently the nephew of Abraham. And further, Abraham himself emigrated to Canaan from Ur of the Chaldees (אֵלֶּךְ כַּשְׁדִּים, *Ur of the Casdim*), Gen. xi. 28; and in Judith v. 6, the Hebrews themselves are said to be descended from the Chaldeans. The region around the river Chaboras, in the northern part of Mesopotamia, is called by Ezekiel (i. 3) *the land of the Chaldeans*. Jeremiah (v. 15) calls them "an ancient nation." See Notes on Isa. xxiii. 13. The Chaldeans were a fierce and warlike people, and when they were subdued by the Assyrians, a portion of them appear to have been placed in Babylon to ward off the incursions of the neighbouring Arabians. In time they gained the ascendancy over their Assyrian masters, and grew into

and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

the mighty empire of Chaldea or Babylonia. A part of them, however, appear to have remained in their ancient country, and enjoyed under the Persians some degree of liberty. Gesenius supposes that the Kurds who have inhabited those regions, at least since the middle ages, are probably the descendants of that people. A very vivid and graphic description of the Chaldeans is given by the prophet Habakkuk, which will serve to illustrate the passage before us, and show that they retained until his times the predatory and fierce character which they had in the days of Job. Chap. i. 6—11:

For lo I raise up the Chaldeans,  
A bitter and hasty nation,  
Which marches far and wide in the earth,  
To possess the dwellings which are not theirs.  
They are terrible and dreadful,  
Their judgments proceed only from themselves.  
Swifter than leopards are their horses,  
And fiercer than the evening wolves.  
Their horsemen prance proudly around;  
And their horsemen shall come from afar and fly.

Like the eagle when he pounces on his prey.  
They all shall come for violence,  
In troops—their glance is ever forward!  
They gather captives like the sand!  
And they scoff at kings,  
And princes are a scorn unto them.  
They deride every strong hold;  
They cast up [mounds of] earth and take it.  
This warlike people ultimately obtained the ascendancy in the Assyrian empire. About the year 597 B.C., Nabopolassar, a viceroy in Babylon, made himself independent of Assyria, contracted an alliance with Cyaxares, King of Media, and with his aid subdued Nineveh, and the whole of Assyria. From that time the Babylonian empire rose, and the history of the Chaldeans becomes the history of Babylon.—*Rob. Calmet*. In the time of Job, however, they were a predatory race, that seem to have wandered far for the sake of plunder. They came from the North, or the East, as the Sabeans came from the South. ¶ *Made out three bands*. Literally, "three heads." That is, they divided themselves, for the sake of plunder, into three parties. Por-



18 While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

19 And, behold, there came a great wind from <sup>1</sup> the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the

<sup>1</sup>from aside.

haps the three thousand camels of Job (ver.3) occupied three places remote from each other, and the object of the speaker is to say that the whole were taken. ¶ *And fell upon the camels.* Marg. "And rushed." The word is different from that which in ver. 15 is rendered *fell*. The word here used (פָּצַץ) means, to spread out, to expand. It is spoken of hostile troops, 1 Chron. xiv. 9, 13; of locusts which spread over a country, Nah. iii. 16; and of an army or company of marauders, Judg. ix. 33, 44; 1 Sam. xxvii. 8. This is its sense here.

18. *Eating, and drinking wine.* Notes on vs. 4, 13.

19. *There came a great wind.* Such tornadoes are not less common in Oriental countries than they are in America. Indeed, they abound more in regions near the equator than they do in those which are more remote; in hot countries, than in those of higher latitude. ¶ *From the wilderness.* Marg. *From aside.* That is, from aside the wilderness. The word here rendered "from aside" in the margin (מֵעֵבֶר), means properly *from across*, and is so rendered by Dr. Good. The word עֵבֶר, *éber*, means, literally, a region or country beyond, or on the other side, sc. of a river or a sea, which one must *pass*. Judg. xi. 18. Gen. i. 10, 11. Deut. i. 1, 5. Then it means on the other side, or beyond. See Notes on Isa. xviii. 1. Here it means that the tornado came sweeping across the desert. On the ample plains of Arabia it would have the opportunity of accumulating its desolating power, and would sweep everything before it. The Hebrew word here rendered *wilderness*, מִדְבָּר, does not express exactly

house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

20 Then Job arose, and rent <sup>m</sup> his <sup>1</sup> mantle, and shaved his head, and fell <sup>n</sup> down upon the ground, and worshipped,

<sup>m</sup> Ge. 37. 29. <sup>1</sup> or, robe.  
<sup>n</sup> 1 Pe. 5. 5.

what is denoted by our word. We mean by it, usually, a region wholly uncultivated, covered with forests, and the habitation of wild beasts. The Hebrew word more properly denotes a *desert*; an uninhabited region, a sterile, sandy country, though sometimes adapted to pasture. In many places the word would be well translated by the phrases, *open fields*, or *open plains*. Comp. Joel ii. 22; Ps. lxxv. 13; Jer. xxiii. 10; Isa. xlii. 11; Gen. xiv. 6, xvi. 7; Ex. iii. 1, xiii. 18; Deut. xi. 24. Comp. Isa. xxxii. 15, xxxv. 1, l. 2. ¶ *And smote the four corners of the house.* Came as a tornado usually does, or like a whirlwind. It seemed to come from all points of the compass, and prostrated everything before it. ¶ *And it fell upon the young men.* The word here rendered "young men" is the same which is rendered in vs. 15, 17, *servants* (עֲבָדִים). There can be no reasonable doubt, however, that the messenger by the word here refers to the children of Job. It is remarkable that his daughters are not particularly specified, but they may be included in the word here used (עֲבָדִים), which may be the same in signification as our phrase "*young people*," including both sexes. So it is rendered by Eichhorn: Es stürzte über den jungen Leuten zusammen.

20. *Then Job arose.* The phrase *to arise*, in the Scriptures, is often used in the sense of beginning to do anything. It does not necessarily imply that the person had been previously sitting. See 2 Sam. xiii. 31. ¶ *And rent his mantle.* The word here rendered *mantle* (מָטְרָא) means, an upper or outer garment. The

dress of Orientals consists principally of an under garment or tunic—not materially differing from the *shirt* with us—except that the sleeves are wider, and under this large and loose pantaloons. Niebuhr, *Reisebeschreib.* i. 157. Over these garments they often throw a full and flowing mantle or robe. This is made without sleeves; it reaches down to the ankles; and when they walk or exercise, it is bound around the middle with a girdle or sash. When they labor, it is usually laid aside. The robe here referred to was worn sometimes by women, 2 Sam. xiii. 18; by men of birth and rank, and by kings, 1 Sam. xv. 27; xviii. 4; xxiv. 5, 12; by priests, 1 Sam. xxviii. 14; and especially by the High Priest under the ephod, Ex. xxviii. 31. See Braun, *de Vest. Sacerd.*, ii. 5. Schroeder, *de Vest. Mulier.* Heb., p. 267; Hartmann *Hebræerin*, iii. p. 512; and Theau. *Antiq. Sacra*, by Ugolin, tom. 509; iii. 74; iv. 504; vii. 90, 1000; xii. 788; xiii. 306. Comp. Notes on Matth. v. 40, and Niebuhr, as quoted above. The custom of rending the garment as an expression of grief prevailed not only among the Jews, but also among the Greeks and Romans. Livy, i. 13; Suetonius, in *Jul. Cæs.*, 33. It prevailed also among the Persians. Curtius, b. x. c. 5, § 17. See Christian Boldich, in *Thesau. Antiq. Sacra.*, tom. xii. p. 145; also tom. xii. 551, 552, 560; xxxiii. 1105, 1112. In proof also that the custom prevailed among the Heathen, see Diod. Sic., lib. i. p. 3, c. 3, respecting the Egyptians; lib. xvii. respecting the Persians; Quin. Curt., iii. 11; Herod. lib. iii., in *Thalia*, lib. viii., in *Urania*, where he speaks of the Persians. So Plutarch in his life of Antony, speaking of the deep grief of Cleopatra, says, περιρρήξατο τοὺς πέπλους ἐπ' αὐτῇ. Thus Herodian, lib. i.: καὶ ῥήξαμένη ἐσθῆτα. So Statius in *Glaucum*:

"Tu modo, fusus humi, lucem aversaris iniquam,  
Nunc torvus pariter vestes et pectora rumpis."

So Virgil:

"Tunc plus Æneas humeris abscondere vestem,  
auxilioque vocare deos, et tendere palmas."

Æn. v. 685.

"Demittunt mentes; it scissa veste Latinus,  
Conjugis attonitus fati urbisque ruina."

Æn. xli. 609.

So Juvenal, Sat. x:

ut primos edere planctus

Cassandra inciperet, scissaque Polyxena palla.

Numerous other quotations from the classic writers, as well as from the Jewish writings, may be seen in Ugolin's *Sacerdotium Hebraicum*, cap. vi. *Thesau. Antiq. Sacra.* Tom. xiii. p. 550, seq. ¶ *And shaved his head.* This was also a common mode of expressing great sorrow. Sometimes it was done by formally cutting off the hair of the head; sometimes by plucking it violently out by the roots, and sometimes also the beard was plucked out, or cut off. The idea seems to have been that mourners should divest themselves of that which was usually deemed most ornamental. Comp. Jer. vii. 29; Isa. vii. 20. Lucian says that the Egyptians expressed their grief by cutting off their hair on the death of their god Apis, and the Syrians in the same manner at the death of Adonis. Olympiodorus remarks on this passage, that the people among whom long hair was regarded as an ornament, cut it off in times of mourning; but those who commonly wore short hair, suffered it on such occasions to grow long. See Rosenmüller, *Morgenland, in loc.* A full description of the customs of the Hebrews in times of mourning, and particularly of the custom of plucking out the hair, may be seen in Martin Geier, *de Hebræorum Luctu*, especially in ch. viii. *Thesau. Antiq. Sacra.*, xxxiii. p. 147, seq.—The meaning here is, that Job was filled with excessive grief, and that he expressed that grief in the manner that was common in his day. Nature demands that there should be some external expression of sorrow; and religion does not forbid it. He pays a tribute to the nature with which God has endowed him who gives an appropriate expression to sorrow; he wars against that nature who attempts to remove from his countenance, conversation, dress, and dwelling, everything that is indicative of the sorrows of his soul in a time of calamity. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus; and religion is not designed to make the heart insensible or incapable of grief. Piety, like every kind of virtue, always increases the

21 And said, Naked ° came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: The

o 1 Ti. 6. 7.

susceptibility of the soul to suffering. Philosophy and sin destroy sensibility; but religion deepens it. Philosophy does it on principle—for its great object is to render the heart dead to all sensibility; sin produces the same effect naturally. The drunkard, the licentious man, and the man of avarice, are incapable of being affected by the tender scenes of life. Guilt has paralyzed their feelings and rendered them dead. But religion allows men to feel, and then shows its power in sustaining the soul, and in imparting its consolations to the heart that is broken and sad. It comes to dry up the tears of the mourner, not to forbid those tears to flow; to pour the balm of consolation into the heart, not to teach the heart to be unfeeling. ¶ *And fell down upon the ground.* So Joshua in a time of great calamity prostrated himself upon the earth and worshipped, Josh. vii. 6.—The Orientals were then in the habit, as they are now, of prostrating themselves on the ground as an act of homage. Job seems to have done this partly as an expression of grief, and partly as an act of devotion—solemnly bowing before God in the time of his great trial. ¶ *And worshipped.* Worshipped God. He resigned himself to his will. A pious man has nowhere else to go in trial; and he will desire to go nowhere else than to the God who has afflicted him.

21. *And said, Naked came I out.* That is, destitute of property, for so the connexion demands. Comp. 1 Tim. vi. 7: "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." A similar expression also occurs in Pliny. *Hominem natura tantum nudum.* Nat. His. Proem., l. vii. Job felt that he was stripped of all, and that he must leave the world as destitute as he entered it. ¶ *My mother's womb.* The earth—the universal mother. That he refers to the earth is apparent, because he speaks of returning thither again. The Chaldee adds

LORD ° gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed ° be the name of the LORD.

p La. 3. 38.

q Ps. 89. 38, 52.

לְבֵית קְבוּרָתָא — *to the house of burial.* The earth is often called the mother of mankind. See Cic. de Nat. Deor., ii. 26; Comp. Ps. cxxxix. 15. Dr. Good remarks, that the origin of all things from the earth introduced, at a very early period of the world, the superstitious worship of the earth, under the title of Dameter, or the *Mother-goddess*, a Chaldee term, probably common to Idumea at the time of the existence of Job himself. It is hence the Greeks derive their Δημήτηρ (De-meter), or, as they occasionally wrote it, Γημήτηρ (Ge-meter), or mother earth, to whom they appropriated annually two religious festivals of extraordinary pomp and solemnity. Thus Lucretius says,

"Linquitur, ut merito maternum nomen  
adepta  
Terra sit, e terra quoniam sunt cuncta  
creata." v. 793.

— "Whence justly EARTH  
Claims the dear name of mother, since alone  
Flowed from herself what'er the sight  
enjoys."

For a full account of the views of the ancients in regard to the *marriage* (ἱερός γάμος) of the "heaven" and the "earth," from which union all things were supposed to proceed, see Creuzer's Symbolik und Mythologie der alt. Völk. Erst. Theil, p. 26, fg. ¶ *And naked.* Stripped of all, I shall go to the common mother of the race. This is exceedingly beautiful language; and in the mouth of Job it was expressive of the most submissive piety. It is not the language of complaint; but was in him connected with the deep feeling that the loss of his property was to be traced to God, and that he had a right to do as he had done. ¶ *The Lord gave.* Heb. יְהוָה. He had nothing when he came into the world, and all that he had obtained had been by the good providence of God. As he gave it, he had a right to remove it. Such was the feeling of Job, and such is the true language of submission everywhere. He who has a proper

22 In <sup>r</sup> all this Job sinned not,

*r c. 2. 10.*

view of what he possesses will feel that it is all to be traced to God, and that he has a right to remove it when he pleases. ¶ *And the Lord hath taken away.* It is not by accident; it is not the result of hap-hazard; it is not to be traced to storms and winds and the bad passions of men. It is the result of intelligent design, and whoever has been the agent or instrument in it, it is to be referred to the overruling providence of God. Why did not Job vent his wrath on the Sabceans? Why did he not blame the Chaldeans? Why did he not curse the tempest and the storm? Why did he not blame his sons for exposing themselves? Why not suspect the malice of Satan? Why not suggest that the calamity was to be traced to bad fortune, to ill-luck, or to an evil administration of human affairs? None of these things occurred to Job. He traced the removal of his property and his loss of children at once to God, and found consolation in the belief that an intelligent and holy Sovereign presided over his affairs, and that he had removed only what he gave. ¶ *Blessed be the name of the LORD.* That is, blessed be JEHOVAH—the name of any one in Hebrew being often used to denote the person himself. The Syriac, Arabic, and some MSS. of the LXX here add, “*for ever.*” —“Here,” says Schmid, “the contrast is observable between the object of Satan, which was to induce Job to renounce God, and the result of the temptation, which was to lead Job to *bless* God!” Thus far Satan had been foiled, and Job had sustained the shock of the calamity, and showed that he did not serve God on account of the benefits which he had received from him.

22. *In all this.* In all his feelings and expressions on this occasion. ¶ *Job sinned not.* He expressed just the feelings, and manifested just the submission which he ought to do. ¶ *Nor charged God foolishly.* Marg., *Attributed folly to God.* Vulg., “Neither did he speak any foolish thing against God.” The LXX render it, “and he did not impute [or give, ἔδωκεν] folly (ἀποπο-

nor <sup>1</sup> charged God foolishly.

<sup>1</sup> or, *attributed folly to God.*

σόνῃ) [indiscretion, Thompson] to God.” Good renders this, “nor vented a murmur against God;” and remarks that the literal rendering would be, “nor vented FROTH against God.” Tindal renders it, “nor murmured foolishly against God.” The Hebrew word נִפְתָּל is derived from the obsolete root נָפַח, *nāphāl*, to spit out; and hence to be insipid, tasteless, not seasoned. The noun, therefore, means properly, that which is spit out; then, that which is insipid or tasteless; and then, folly. Wit and wisdom are represented by Oriental writers as pungent and seasoned. Comp. the expression among the Greeks of “*Attic salt,*” meaning wit or wisdom. The word *folly* in the Scriptures often means wickedness, for this is supreme folly. Here it has this sense, and means that Job did not say anything *wrong*. Satan was disappointed, and had borne a false accusation before God. He did not charge God foolishly, and he did not curse him to his face.

From this instructive narrative of the manner in which Job received afflictions, we may learn, (1.) That true piety will bear the removal of property and friends without murmuring. Religion is not based on such things, and their removal cannot shake it. It is founded deeper in the soul, and mere external changes cannot destroy it. (2.) When we are afflicted, we should not vent our wrath on winds and waves; on the fraud and perfidy of our fellow-men; on embarrassments and changes in the commercial world; on the pestilence and the storm. Any or all of these may be employed as instruments in taking away our property or our friends, but we should trace the calamity ultimately to God. Storms and winds and waves, malignant spirits and our fellow men, do no more than God permits. They are all restrained and kept within proper limits. They are not directed by chance, but they are under the control of an intelligent Being, and are the wise appointment of a holy God. (3.) God has a right

to remove our comforts. He gave them—not to be our permanent inheritance, but to be withdrawn when he pleases. It is a proof of goodness that we have been permitted to tread his earth so long, though we should be allowed to walk it no more; to breathe his air so long—though we should be permitted to inhale it no more; to look upon his sun and moon, and stars so long—though we should be permitted to walk by their light no more; to enjoy the society of the friends whom he has given us so long—though we should enjoy that society no longer. A temporary gift may be removed at the pleasure of the giver, and we hold all our comforts at the mere good pleasure of God. (4.) We see the nature of true resignation. It is not because we can always see the *reason* why we are afflicted; it consists in bowing to the will of a holy and intelligent God, and in the feeling that he has a *right* to remove what he has given us. It is his; and may be taken away when he pleases. It may be, and should be yielded, without a murmur—and to do this *because* God wills it, is true resignation. (5.) We see the true source of *comfort* in trials. It is not in the belief that things are regulated by chance and hap-hazard; or even that they are controlled by physical laws. We may have the clearest philosophical view of the mode in which tempests sweep away property, or the pestilence our friends; we may understand the laws by which all this

is done, but this affords no consolation. It is only when we perceive an *intelligent being* presiding over these events, and see that they are the result of plan and intention on his part, that we can find comfort in trial. What satisfaction is it for me to understand the law by which fire burns when my property is swept away; or to know *how* disease acts on the human frame when my child dies; or how the plague produces its effects on the body when friend after friend is laid in the grave? This is *Philosophy*; and this is the consolation which this world furnishes. I want some higher consolation than that which results from the knowledge of unconscious laws. I want to have the assurance that it is the result of intelligent design, and that this design is connected with a benevolent end—and that I find only in religion. (6.) We see the *power* of religion in sustaining in the time of trial. How calm and submissive was this holy man! How peaceful and resigned! Nothing else but piety could have done this. Philosophy blunts the feelings, paralyzes the sensibilities, and chills the soul; but it does not give consolation. It is only confidence in God; a feeling that he is right; and a profound and holy acquiescence in his will, that can produce support in trials like these. This we may have as well as Job; and this is indispensable in a world so full of calamity and sorrow as this is.

## CHAPTER II.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

The second trial of Job. The day returns when the sons of God come to present themselves before God: ver. 1.—Jehovah inquires of Satan whence he came, and particularly whether he had attentively considered the case of Job, and that he held fast his integrity notwithstanding his afflictions: vs. 2, 3.—Satan answers, that it was because he had not been afflicted enough; that if he was subjected to bodily sufferings he would curse Jehovah to his face: vs. 4, 5.—God consents that Job should be subjected to a second trial, only on the condition that his life should be spared: ver. 6.—Job's sore affliction: vs. 7, 8.—His wife conjures him to curse God and die: ver. 9.—Job's stern rebuke of his wife, and calm submission to God: ver. 10.—The visit of his three friends to condole with him, and their amazement at the extent of his sufferings: vs. 11—13.

**A** GAIN<sup>a</sup> there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD.

2 And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

a c. 1. 6, &c.

1. *Again there was a day, &c.* See Notes, ch. i. 6. These seasons are represented as periodical, when the angels came, as it were, to make report to God of what they had observed and done. The Chaldees renders this, "And there was a day of the great judgment, (יִדּוּם דִּינָא נְקִיָּא,) a day of the remission of sins, (יִדּוּם שְׁבִיבָא סְדִינָא,) and there came bands (בָּרִי) of angels." ¶ *To present himself before the LORD.* This does not occur in the former statement in ch. i. 6. It here means that he came before the Lord after he had had permission to afflict Job. The Chaldees renders it, "That he might stand in judgment (בְּרִינָא) before the Lord."

2. *And the Lord said unto Satan, &c.* See Notes on ch. i. 7.

3. *Hast thou considered.* Notes ch. i. 8. ¶ *That there is none like him in the earth.* The same addition is made here by the Septuagint which occurs in ch. i. 1. See Notes on that verse. ¶ *And still he holdeth fast his integrity.* Notwithstanding all the efforts made to show that his piety was the result of mere selfishness. The word *integrity* here (תְּמִימָה) means *perfection*; another form of the word which is rendered "perfect" in ch. i. 1. See Notes on that verse. ¶ *Although thou movedst me.* The word rendered "movedst" (סָוָה) means to incite, to impel, to urge, to irritate against any one. Josh. xv. 18; Judg. i. 14; 2 Chron. xviii. 2; 1 Sam. xxvi. 19; Jer. xliii. 3. The LXX ren-

der this in a peculiar manner, "And thou hast ordered (ἐπ'αγ) his property to be destroyed in vain." (δυσκυνήσ,) i. e., without accomplishing the purpose intended. ¶ *To destroy him.* The word here used (from φάγω) means properly to swallow, to devour, with the idea of eagerness or greediness. It is then used in the sense of to consume, or destroy. Comp. Job xx. 18; Prov. i. 12; Num. xvi. 30; Ps. lxxix. 16. In the margin it is rendered, "swallow him up." ¶ *Without cause.* Without any sufficient reason. The cause assigned by Satan (ch. i. 9—11) was, that the piety of Job was selfish, and that if God should remove his possessions, he would show that he had no true religion. God says now that it was demonstrated that there was no reason for having made the trial. The result had shown that the charge was unfounded, and that his piety still remained, though he was stripped of all that he had. This passage may remind us of the speech of Neptune in favor of Æneas, *Iliad*, v. 297:

4 And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, b c. 27. 5, 6, Ps 26 1. 41. 12. <sup>1</sup> swallow him up.

"And can ye see this righteous chief atone With guiltless blood for vices not his own? To all the gods his constant vows were paid; Sure though he wars for Troy he claims our aid. Fate wills not this!"—  
DOPB.

4. *Skin for skin.* This is a proverbial expression, whose origin is unknown, nor is its meaning, as a proverb, entirely clear. The general sense of the passage here is plain, for it is immediately explained that a man would give everything which he had to save

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yea, all that a man hath will he give <sup>c</sup> for his life.

<sup>c</sup> Matt. 6, 25.

his life; and the idea here is, that if Job was so afflicted in his body that he was likely to die, he would give up all his religion in order to purchase life. His religion, which had borne the comparatively trifling test before applied to it, would not bear the severer trial if his life was endangered. In regard to the proverb itself, a great variety of explanations has been given. The ancient versions throw no light on it. The Vulgate renders it, *Pellem pro pelle*. The LXX, *Δέρμα υπὲρ δέρματος*—skin for, or instead of, skin. The Chaldee renders it "member for member," אברא אקסבל אברא — and the author of that paraphrase seems to have supposed that it means that a man would give the members of his body or his limbs to preserve his life. Parkhurst renders it, "skin after skin," meaning as he explains it, that a man may bear to part with all that he has, and even to have his skin, as it were, stripped off again and again, provided only that his life is safe. Noyes supposes that it means that any man will give the skin or life of another, whether animal or man, to save his own; and that Job gave up all, without complaint, from the selfish fear of exposing his own life to danger. Dr. Good remarks on the passage, that the skins or spoils of beasts, in the rude and early ages of man, were the most valuable property he could acquire, and that for which he most frequently combated. Thus Lucretius says,

"Tunc igitur *pelles*, nunc aurum et purpura,  
curis

*Præsent hominum vitam, belloque fatigant.*"  
v. 1422.

<sup>c</sup> Then man for skins contended; purple now,  
And gold, for ever plunge him into war."

In various parts of the book of Job, however, Dr. Good remarks, the word *skin* imports the *person* of a man generally, as well as his *property*, the whole living body which it envelopes, as in ch. xviii. 13, xix. 26. "It is," says he, "upon the double meaning of the same term, and the play which is here given to it, by employing the term first in one

sense and then in the other, that the gist of the proverb, as of a thousand others similarly constructed, depends. "Skin for skin" is, in this view, in plain English, "property for person," or "the skin forming property for the skin forming person." See a somewhat similar view presented by Callaway, in Bush's Illustrations, *in loco*. The editor of the Pictorial Bible coincides mainly with this view, and supposes that the reference is to the time when trade was conducted by barter, and when the skins of animals, being a most frequent and valuable commodity, were used to represent property. Tributes, ransoms, &c., he observes, were paid in skins. According to this, it means that a man would give "skin upon skin;" that is, would pile one piece of property upon another, and give *all* that he had in order to save his life. It refers to the necessity of submitting to one great evil rather than incur a greater, answering to the Turkish proverb, "We must give our beards to save our heads." According to Gesenius, it means "life for life." Drusius explains it as meaning, that he would give the skin of others, as of his sons, to save his own; that is, that he was unmoved so long as his own skin or life was safe. The same view is given by Ephrem the Syrian. "Skin for skin; the skin, not only of flocks, but even of his sons will he give, in order to save his own." This view also is adopted by Umbreit. That is, his religion was supremely selfish. The loss of property and even of children he could bear, provided his person was untouched. His own health and life; his own skin and body were dearer to him than anything else. Other men would have been afflicted by the loss of children and property. But Job was willing to part with any or all of these, provided he himself was safe. Rosenmüller supposes that the word *skin* here is used for the whole body; and says that the sense is, that he would give the body of another for his own, as in Ex. xxi. 23. "The meaning of this proverbial formula."

says he, "is, that any one would redeem his own safety by the skin of others; that is, not only by the skins of oxen, camels, servants, but even of his own children." Schultens supposes it means that a man would submit to any sufferings in order to save his life; that he would be willing to be flayed alive; to be repeatedly exco-rated; to have, so to speak, one skin stripped off after another, if he might save his own life. According to this, the idea is, that the loss of life was the great calamity to be feared, and that a man would give *any* thing in order to save it. Umbreit says, "there is nothing so valuable to a man that he will not exchange it—one thing for another; one outward good for another, *skin for skin*. But life, the inward good, is to him of no value that can be estimated. That he will give for nothing; and much more, he will offer everything for that." Another solution is offered in the *Biblische Untersuchungen*, ii. Th. s. 88. "Before the use of gold, traffic was conducted chiefly by barter. Men exchanged what was valuable to themselves for what others had which they wanted. Those who hunted wild beasts would bring their skins to market, and would exchange them for bows and arrows. Since these traffickers were exposed to the danger of being robbed, they often took with them those who were armed, who agreed to defend them on condition that they should have a part of the skins which they took, and in this way they purchased their property and life." That is, they have the skins of animals for the safety of their own; all that they had they would surrender, in order that their lives might be saved. See Rosenmüller's *Morgenland*, *in loc.* None of these solutions appear to me perfectly satisfactory, and the proverb is involved in perplexity still. It seems to refer to some kind of barter or exchange, and to mean that a man would give up one thing for another; or one piece of property of less value in order to save a greater; and that in like manner he would be willing to surrender *every thing*, in order that his life, the most valuable object, might be preserved. But the exact meaning of the proverb,

I suspect, has not yet been perceived. ¶ *Yea, all that a man hath.* This is evidently designed to express the same thing as the proverb, "skin for skin," or to furnish an illustration of that. The meaning is plain. A man is willing to surrender all that he has, in order to preserve his life. He will part with property and friends, in order that he may be kept alive. If a man, therefore, is to be reached in the most tender and vital part; if anything is to be done that shall truly reveal his character, his life must be put in danger, and his true character will then be revealed. The object of Satan is to say, that a test had not been applied to Job of sufficient severity to show what he really was. What he had lost was a mere trifle compared with what would be if he was subjected to severe bodily sufferings, so that his life would be in peril. It is to be remembered that these are the words of Satan, and that they are not necessarily true. Inspiration is concerned only in securing the *exact record* of what is said, not in affirming all that is said is true. We shall have frequent occasion to illustrate this sentiment in other portions of the book. In regard to the sentiment here expressed, however, it is in general true. Men will surrender their property, their houses, and lands, and gold, to save their lives. Many, too, would see their friends perish, in order that they might be saved. It is not universally true, however. It is possible to conceive that a man might so love his property as to submit to any torture, even endangering life, rather than surrender it. Many, too, if endangered by shipwreck, would give up a plank in order to save their wives or children, at the risk of their own lives. Many will give their lives rather than surrender their liberty; and many would die rather than abandon their principles. Such were the noble Christian martyrs; and such a man was Job. Satan urged that if his life were made wretched, he would abandon his integrity, and show that his professed piety was selfish, and his religion false and hollow. The Syriac and Arabic add, "that he may be safe."



5 But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.

6 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine

hand; <sup>1</sup> but save his life.

7 So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.

<sup>1</sup> or, only.

5. *But put forth thine hand now.* Satan felt that he had no power to afflict Job without permission. Malignant as he was, he knew that God only could subject the holy man to this trial—another proof that Satan is under the control of the Almighty, and acts only as he is permitted to act in tempting and trying the good. ¶ *And touch his bone.* See Note on ch. i. 11. Afflict his body so as to endanger his life. The words “bone” and “flesh” denote the whole body. The idea was, that the whole body should be subjected to severe pain. ¶ *And he will curse thee to thy face.* Notes on ch. i. 11.

6. *Behold, he is in thine hand.* He is at thy disposal. See ch. i. 12. Margin. ¶ *But save his life.* Margin. *Only.* This was to be the only limitation. It would seem that he had the power to make any selection of disease, and to afflict him in any manner, provided it did not terminate fatally. The keen sorrows which Job afterwards endured showed the malignancy of the Tempter; evinced his ingenuity in inflicting pain, and his knowledge of what the human frame could be made to bear.

7. *So went Satan forth.* Ch. i. 12. ¶ *And smote Job with sore boils.* The English word *boil* denotes the well known tumour upon the flesh, accompanied with severe inflammation; a sore angry swelling. *Webster.* The Hebrew word, however, is in the singular number (פצע), and should have been so rendered in our translation. Dr. Good renders it “a burning ulceration.” The Vulgate translates it, *ulcere pessimo.* The Septuagint, ἔλκει πονηρῶ—with a foul ulcer. The Hebrew word פצע, means a burning sore, an inflamed ulcer, a bile. *Gesenius.* It is derived from פצע, *shâkhân*, an obsolete root, retained in Arabic, and meaning to be hot or

inflamed. It is translated *bile* or *boil*, in Ex. 9, 10, 11; Lev. xiii. 18; 2 Kings xx. 7; Isa. xxxviii. 21 (see Notes on that place); Lev. xiii. 19, 20; Job ii. 7; and *botch*, Deut. xxviii. 27, 35. The word does not occur elsewhere in the Scriptures. In Deut. xxviii. 27, it means “the botch of Egypt,” some species of leprosy, undoubtedly, which prevailed there. In regard to the disease of Job, we may learn some of its characteristics, not only from the usual meaning of the word, but from the circumstances mentioned in the book itself. It was such that he took a potsherd to scrape himself with, ch. ii. 8; such as to make his nights restless, and full of tossings to and fro, and to clothe his flesh with clods of dust, and with worms, and to break his flesh, or to constitute a running sore or ulcer, ch. vii. 4, 5; such as to make him bite his flesh for pain, ch. xiii. 14, and to make him like a rotten thing, or a garment that is moth-eaten, ch. xiii. 28; such that his face was foul with weeping, ch. xvi. 16, and such as to fill him with wrinkles, and to make his flesh lean, ch. xvi. 8; such as to make his breath corrupt, ch. xvii. 1, and his bones cleave to his skin, ch. xix. 20, 26; such as to pierce his bones with pain in the night, ch. xxx. 17, and to make his skin black, and to burn up his bones with heat, ch. xxx. 30. It has been commonly supposed that the disease of Job was a species of black leprosy, commonly called *Elephantiasis*, which prevails much in Egypt. This disease received its name from ἐλέφας, *an elephant*, from the swelling produced by it causing a resemblance to that animal in the limbs; or because it rendered the skin like that of the elephant, scabious and dark colored. It is called by the Arabs *judhām* (Dr. Good), and is said to produce in the countenance a grim, distorted, and *lion-like*

8 And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.<sup>d</sup>

*d* Matt. 11. 24.

set of features, and hence has been called by some *Leontiasis*. It is known as the *black* leprosy, to distinguish it from a more common disorder called the *white* leprosy—an affection which the Greeks call *Leuce*, or *whiteness*. The disease of Job seems to have been a universal ulcer; producing an eruption over his entire person, and attended with violent pain, and constant restlessness. A universal bile or groups of biles over the body would accord with the account of the disease in the various parts of the book. In the elephantiasis the skin is covered with incrustations like those of an elephant. It is a chronic and contagious disease, marked by a thickening of the legs, with a loss of hair and feeling, a swelling of the face, and a hoarse nasal voice. It affects the whole body; the bones as well as the skin are covered with spots and tumors, at first red, but afterwards black. *Core, Ency. Webster*. It should be added that the leprosy in all its forms was regarded as contagious, and of course involved the necessity of a separation from society; and all the circumstances attending this calamity were such as deeply to humble a man of the former rank and dignity of Job.

8. *And he took him a potsherd.* The word here used (שֶׁדֶרֶת) means a fragment of a broken vessel. See Notes on Isa. xiv. 9. The LXX render it *ὄστρακον*—a shell. One object of taking this was to remove from his body the filth accumulated by the universal ulcer, comp. ch. vii. 4, 5; and another design probably was, to indicate the greatness of his calamity and sorrow. The ancients were accustomed to show their grief by significant external actions (comp. Notes on ch. i. 20), and nothing could more strongly denote the greatness of the calamity, than for a man of wealth, honor, and distinction, to sit down in the ashes, to take a piece of broken earthenware, and begin to scrape his body covered over with undressed and

9 Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.

most painful sores. It does not appear that anything was done to heal him, or any kindness shown in taking care of his disease. It would seem that he was at once separated from his home, as a man whom none would venture to approach, and was doomed to endure his suffering without sympathy from others. ¶ *To scrape himself withal.* The word here used (רָחַץ) has the sense of grating, scraping, sawing; or to scrape or rasp with an edged tool. The same word identically, as to letters, is used at present among the Arabs; meaning to rasp or scrape with any kind of tool. The idea here seems to be, that Job took the pieces of broken pottery that he found among the ashes to scrape himself with. ¶ *And he sat down among the ashes.* On the expressions of grief among the ancients, see Notes on ch. i. 20. The general ideas of mourning among the nations of antiquity seem to have been, to strip off all their ornaments; to put on the coarsest apparel, and to place themselves in the most humiliating positions. To sit on the ground (see Note on Isa. iii. 26), or on a heap of ashes, or a pile of cinders, was a common mode of expressing sorrow. See Note on Isa. lviii. 5. To wear sackcloth, to shave their heads and their beards, and to abstain from pleasant food and from all cheerful society, and to utter loud and long exclamations or shrieks, was also a common mode of indicating grief. The Vulgate renders this *sedens in sterquilino*, "sitting on a dunghill." The LXX, "and he took a shell to scrape off the ichor (ιχώρα), the sanies, or filth produced by a running ulcer, and sat upon the ashes out of the city," implying that his grief was so excessive that he left the city and his friends, and went out to weep alone.

9. *Then said his wife unto him.* Some remarkable additions are made by the ancient versions to this passage. The Chaldee renders it, "and *Dinah* (דִּנָּה), his wife, said to him." The author

of that paraphrase seems to have supposed that Job lived in the time of Jacob, and had married his daughter Dinah. Gen. xxx. 21. Drusius says, that this was the opinion of the Hebrews, and quotes a declaration from the Gemara to this effect: "Job lived in the days of Jacob, and was born when the children of Israel went down into Egypt; and when they departed thence he died. He lived, therefore, 210 years, as long as they were in Egypt." This is mere tradition, but it shows the ancient impression as to the time when Job lived. The LXX have introduced a remarkable passage here, of which the following is a translation. "After much time had elapsed, his wife said unto him, How long wilt thou persevere, saying, Behold, I will wait a little longer, cherishing the hope of my recovery? Behold, the memorial of thee has disappeared from the earth—those sons and daughters, the pangs and sorrows of my womb, for whom I toiled laboriously in vain. Even thou sittest among loathsome worms, passing the night in the open air, whilst I, a wanderer and a drudge, from place to place, and from house to house, watch the sun till his going down, that I may rest from the toils and sorrows that now oppress me. But speak some word towards the Lord (*τε ῥῆμα εἰς κύριον*) and die." Whence this addition had its origin, it is impossible now to say. Dr. Good says it is found in Theodotion, in the Syriac, and the Arabic (in this he errs, for it is not in the Syriac and Arabic in Walton's Polyglott), and in the Latin of St. Ambrose. Bathe suggests that it was probably added by some person who thought it incredible that an angry woman could be content with saying so little as is ascribed in the Hebrew to the wife of Job. It may have been originally written by some one in the margin of his Bible by way of paraphrase, and the transcriber, seeing it there, may have supposed it was omitted accidentally from the text, and so inserted it in the place where it now stands. It is one of the many instances, at all events, which show that implicit confidence is not to be placed in the Septuagint. There is not the slightest evidence that this was

ever in the Hebrew text. It is not wholly unnatural, and as an exercise of the fancy is not without ingenuity and plausibility; and yet the simple but abrupt statement in the Hebrew seems best to accord with nature. The evident distress of the wife of Job, according to the whole narrative, is not so much that she was subjected to trials, and that she was compelled to wander about without a home, as that Job should be so patient, and that he did not yield to the temptation. ¶ *Dost thou still retain thine integrity?* Notes ver. 3. The question implies that, in her view, he ought not to be expected to manifest patience and resignation in these circumstances. He had endured evils which showed that confidence ought not to be reposed in a God who would thus inflict them. This is all that we know of the wife of Job. Whether this was her general character, or whether she yielded to the temptation of Satan and cursed God, and thus heightened the sorrows of Job by her unexpected impropriety of conduct, is unknown. It is not conclusive evidence that her general character was bad; and it may be that the strength of her usual virtue and piety was overcome by accumulated calamities. She expressed, however, the feelings of corrupt human nature everywhere when sorely afflicted. The suggestion will cross the mind, often with almost irresistible force, that a God who thus afflicts his creatures is not worthy of confidence; and many a time a child of God is tempted to give vent to feelings of rebellion and murmuring like this, and to renounce all his religion. ¶ *Curse God.* See Notes on ch. i. 11. The Hebrew word is the same. Dr. Good renders it, "And yet dost thou hold fast thine integrity, blessing God and dying?" Noyes translates it, "Renounce God, and die." Rosenmüller and Umbreit, "Bid farewell to God, and die." Castellio renders it, "Give thanks to God and die." The response of Job, however (ver. 10), shows that he understood her as exciting him to reject, renounce, or curse God. The sense is, that she regarded him as unworthy of confidence, and submission as unreasonable, and she wished Job to

10 But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of

*c* Ja. 5. 10, 11.

express this and be relieved from his misery. Roberts supposes that this was a heathen sentiment, and says that nothing is more common than for the heathen, under certain circumstances, to curse their gods. "That the man who has made expensive offerings to his deity, in hope of gaining some great blessing, and who has been disappointed, will pour out all his imprecations on the god whose good offices have (as he believes) been prevented by some superior deity. A man in reduced circumstances says, 'Yes, yes, my god has lost his eyes; they are put out; he cannot look after my affairs.' 'Yes,' said an extremely rich devotee of the supreme god Siva, after he had lost his property, 'Shall I serve him any more? What! make offerings to him! No, no, He is the lowest of all gods!'" ¶ *And die.* Probably she regarded God as a stern and severe Being, and supposed that by indulging in blasphemy Job would provoke him to cut him off at once. She did not expect him to lay wicked hands on himself. She expected that God would at once interpose and destroy him. The sense is, that nothing but death was to be expected, and the sooner he provoked God to cut him off from the land of the living the better.

10. *As one of the foolish women speaketh.* The word here rendered *foolish* (בְּלִיָּהּ, from בָּלָה), means properly, stupid or foolish, and then wicked, abandoned, impious — the idea of *sin* and *folly* being closely connected in the Scriptures, or sin being regarded as supreme folly. 1 Sam. xxv. 25; 2 Sam. iii. 33; Ps. xiv. 1, liii. 2. The Arabs still use the word with the same compass of signification. *Gesenius.* The word is here used in the sense of *wicked*; and the idea is, that the sentiment which she uttered was impious, or was such as were on the lips of the wicked. Sanctius supposes that there is a reference here to Idumean females who, like

God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin<sup>f</sup> with his lips.

*f* Ps. 39. 1.

other women, reproached and cast away their gods, if they did not obtain what they asked when they prayed to them. Homer represents Achilles and Menelaus as reproaching the gods. Il. i. 353; iii. 365. See Rosenmüller, *Morgenland*, in *loc.* ¶ *What? shall we receive good at the hand of God.* Having received such abundant tokens of kindness from him, it was unreasonable to complain when they were taken away, and when he sent calamity in their stead. ¶ *And shall we not receive evil?* Shall we not expect it? Shall we not be willing to bear it when it comes? Shall we not have sufficient confidence in him to believe that his dealings are ordered in goodness and equity? Shall we at once lose all our confidence in our great Benefactor the moment he takes away our comforts, and visits us with pain? This is the true expression of piety. It submits to all the arrangements of God without a murmur. It receives blessings with gratitude; it is resigned when calamities are sent in their place. It esteems it as a mere favor to be permitted to breathe the air which God has made, to look upon the light of his sun, to tread upon his earth, to inhale the fragrance of his flowers, and to enjoy the society of the friends whom he gives; and when he takes one or all away, it feels that he has taken only what belongs to him, and withdraws a privilege to which we had no claim. In addition to that, true piety feels that all claim to any blessing, if it had ever existed, has been forfeited by sin. What right has a sinner to complain when God withdraws his favor, and subjects him to suffering? What claim has he on God, that should make it wrong for Him to visit him with calamity?

Wherefore doth a living man complain,  
A man for the punishment of his sins?  
*Lam. iii. 39.*

¶ *In all this did not Job sin with his lips.* See Notes, ch. i. 22. This re-

11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place: Eliphaz the Temanite, <sup>g</sup> and Bil-

<sup>g</sup> Ge. 36. 11; Ge. 49. 7.

mark is made here perhaps in contrast with what occurred afterwards. He subsequently did give utterance to improper sentiments, and was rebuked accordingly, but thus far what he had expressed was in accordance with truth, and with the feelings of most elevated piety.

11. *Now when Job's three friends heard.* It would seem from this that these men were his particular friends. ¶ *They came every one from his own place.* His residence. This was the result of agreement or appointment thus to meet together. ¶ *Eliphaz the Temanite.* This was the most prominent of his friends. In the ensuing discussion he regularly takes the lead, advances the most important and impressive considerations, and is followed and sustained by the others. The LXX render this Ἐλιφάζ ὁ Θαμανῶν βασιλεὺς—"Eliphaz, the king of the Themanites." The Hebrew does not intimate that he held any office or rank. The word rendered *Temanite* (תִּמְנִי) is a patronymic from תִּמְנָן *Tēmān*, meaning properly *at the right hand*, and then *the South*. The Hebrew geographers are always represented as looking to the East, and not towards the North, as we do; and hence, with them, the right hand denotes the South. Teman or Theman was a son of Eliphaz, and grandson of Esau. See Gen. xxxvi. 15, where he is spoken of as "duke" or prince (הַיָּדָה), a head of a family or tribe, a chieftain. He is supposed to have lived on the East of Idumea. Eusebius places Theman in Arabia Petrea, five miles from Petra (see Notes on Isa. xvi. 1), and says that there was a Roman garrison there. The Temanites were celebrated for wisdom. "Is wisdom no more in Teman?" Jer. xlix. 7. The country was distinguished also for pro-

ducing men of strength: "And thy mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed." Obad. 9. That this country was a part of Idumea is apparent, not only from the fact that Teman was a descendant of Esau, who settled there, but from several places in the Scriptures. Thus in Ezek. xxv. 13, it is said, "I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and I will make it desolate from Teman, and they of Dedan shall fall by the sword." In Amos, i. 12, Teman is mentioned as in the vicinity of Bozrah, at one time the capital of Idumea: "But I will send a fire upon Teman, which shall devour the palaces of Bozrah." See Notes on Isa. xxi. 14. The inhabitants of this country were distinguished in early times for wisdom, and particularly for that kind of wisdom which is expressed in close observation of men and manners, and the course of events, and which was expressed in proverbs. Thus they are mentioned in the book of Baruch, iii. 23: "The merchants of Meran and of Theman, the authors of fables, and searchers out of understanding," οἱ μυθολόγοι καὶ οἱ ἐκζητηταὶ τῆς συνέσεως. ¶ *And Bildad the Shuhite.* The second speaker uniformly in the following argument. The LXX render this, "Bildad the sovereign of the Sauchians," Σαυχίων ἡγεμῶν. Shuah, שׁוּא, (meaning a pit) was the name of a son of Abraham, by Keturah, and also of an Arabian tribe, descended from him. Gen. xxv. 2. "The country of the Shuhites," says Gesenius, "was not probably the same with the Σακκαία of Ptolemy 5, 15, eastward of Batanea." But the exact situation of the Shuhites is unknown. It is difficult to determine the geography of the tribes of Arabia, as many of them are migratory and unsettled. It would seem that Bildad did not reside very far from Eliphaz, for they made an agree-

<sup>h</sup> Ge. 25. 2.

<sup>i</sup> Ro. 12. 15.

12 And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice and

wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust <sup>k</sup> upon their heads toward heaven.

<sup>k</sup> Ne. 9. 1; La. 2. 10.

ment to go and visit Job. ¶ *And Zophar the Naamathite.* An inhabitant of Naamah, whose situation is unknown. The LXX render this, "Zophar, king of the Minaians—Μιναιῶν βασιλεὺς. A place by the name of Naamah is mentioned in Josh. xv. 41, as in the limits of the tribe of Judah. But this was a considerable distance from the residence of Job, and it is not probable that Zophar was far from that region. Conjecture is useless as to the place where he lived. The Editor of the Pictorial Bible, however, supposes that Zophar was from the town in Judah mentioned in Josh. xv. 41. He observes that this town is "mentioned in a list of the uttermost cities of Judah's lot, 'towards the coast of Edom southward,' it is farther among that portion of those towns that lay 'in the valley' (Josh. xv. 33), which valley is the same that contained Joktheel (Josh. xv. 38), which is supposed to have been Petra. Naamah was probably, therefore, in or near the Ghor or valley which extends from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Akaba.—These considerations," he adds, "seem to establish the conclusion that the scene of this book is laid in the land of Edom." In the first part of this verse, a remarkable addition occurs in the Chaldee paraphrase.—It is as follows: "And the three friends of Job heard of all the evil which had come upon him, and when they saw the trees of his gardens (Chald. *Paradise*, פֶּדֶסָהוּן) that they were dried up, and the bread of his support that it was turned into living flesh (לֶחֶם שֶׁמֵתָהוּן אֲחֵהֶן לְבָשָׁר חַיָּה), and the wine of his drink turned into blood, (וְיַיִן מִשְׁתֵּהוּן אֲחֵהֶן לְדָמָא)." Here is evidently the doctrine of *transubstantiation*, the change of bread into flesh, and of wine into blood, and bears the marks of having been interpolated by some friend of the Papacy. But when or by whom it was done is unknown. It is a most stupid forgery. The evi-

dent intention of it was to sustain the doctrine of transubstantiation, by the plea that it was found far back in the times of Job, and that it could not be regarded, therefore, as an absurdity. To what extent it has ever been used by the advocates of that doctrine, I have no means of ascertaining. Its interpolation here is a pretty sure proof of the conviction of the author of it that the doctrine is not found in any fair interpretation of the Bible. ¶ *For they had made an appointment together.* They had agreed to go together, and they evidently set out on the journey together. The Chaldee—or some one who has interpolated a passage in the Chaldee—has introduced a circumstance in regard to the design of their coming, which savors also of the Papacy. It is as follows: "They came each one from his place, and for the merit of this they were freed from the place destined to them in Gehenna," (בְּמִקְדָּשָׁא), a passage evidently intended to defend the doctrine of *purgatory*, by the authority of the ancient Chaldee Paraphrase. ¶ *To come to mourn with him, and to comfort him.* To show the appropriate sympathy of friends in a time of peculiar calamity. They did not come with an intention to reproach him, or to charge him with being a hypocrite.

12. *And when they lifted up their eyes afar off.* "When they saw him at the distance at which they could formerly recognise him without difficulty, disease had so altered his appearance that at first sight they knew him not." *Noyes.* ¶ *They lifted up their voice.* This is a common expression in the Scriptures, to denote grief. Gen. xxvii. 38; xxix. 11; Judg. ii. 4; Ruth, i. 9; 1 Sam. xxiv. 16, *et sæpe al.* We learn to suppress the expressions of grief. The ancients gave vent to their sorrows aloud. They even hired persons to aid them in their lamentations; and it became a professional business of women to devote themselves to the office of making an

13 So they sat down <sup>1</sup> with him upon the ground seven <sup>m</sup> days

1 Ezr. 9. 3-5.

m Ge. 50. 10.

outcry on occasions of mourning. The same thing prevails in the East at present. Friends sit around the grave of the dead, or go there at different times, and give a long and doleful shriek or howl, as expressive of their grief.

¶ *And they rent every one his mantle.* See Notes on ch. i. 20. ¶ *And sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.* Another expression of sorrow. Comp. Lam. ii. 10; Neh. ix. 1; 1 Sam. iv. 12; Josh. vii. 6; Ezek. xxvii. 30. The indications of grief here referred to, were such as were common in ancient times. They resemble, in a remarkable manner, the mode in which Achilles gave utterance to his sorrow, when informed of the death of Patroclus. Iliad, xviii. 21—27.

"A sudden horror shot through all the chief,  
And wrapp'd his senses in the cloud of grief;  
Cast on the ground, with furious hands he spread

The scorching ashes o'er his graceful head,  
His purple garments, and his golden hairs;  
Those he deforms with dust, and these he tears;  
On the hard soil his groaning breast he threw,  
And roll'd and grovelling as to earth he grew."  
POPE.

Thus far the feelings of the three friends were entirely kind, and all that they did was expressive of sympathy for the sufferer.

13. *So they sat down with him upon the ground.* See Notes on ch. i. 20; ii. 8. Comp. Ezra, ix. 3: "I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head, and my beard, and sat down astonished." ¶ *Seven days and seven nights.* Seven days was the usual time of mourning among the Orientals. Thus they made public lamentation for Jacob seven days. Gen. 1. 10. Thus, on the death of Saul they fasted seven days. 1 Sam. xxxi. 13. So the author of the book of Ecclesiasticus says, "Seven days do men mourn for him that is dead." Ch. xxii. 12. It cannot be supposed that they remained in the same place and posture for seven days and nights, but that they mourned with him during that time in the usual way. An instance of grief remarkably similar

and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that *his* grief was very great.

to this, continuing through a period of six days, is ascribed by Euripides to Orestes:

Ἐντεῦθεν ἀγρία συντακείς νόσφ' νοσεῖ  
Τλήμων Ὀρέστης, ὃ δὲ πῶσιν ἐν δαίμονις  
Κεῖται.

"Ἐκτον δὲ δὴ τὸδ' ἡμαρ, κ. τ. λ.

"'Tis hence Orestes, agonized with griefs  
And sore disease, lies on his restless bed  
Delirious. Now six morns have winged their flight,

Since by his hands his parent massacred  
Burnt on the pile in expiatory flames.  
Stubborn the while he keeps a rigid fast,  
Nor bathes, nor dresses; but beneath his robes  
He skulks, and if he steals a pause from rage,  
'Tis but to feel his weight of woe and weep."

¶ *And none spake a word unto him.*—That is, on the subject of his grief. They came to condole with him, but they had now nothing to say. They saw that his affliction was much greater than they had anticipated. ¶ *For they saw that his grief was very great.* This is given as a reason why they were silent. But *how* this produced silence, or why his great grief was a cause of their silence, is not intimated. Perhaps one or all of the following considerations may have led to it. (1.) They were amazed at the extent of his sufferings. Amazement is often expressed by silence. We look upon that which is out of the usual course of events without being able to express anything. We are "struck dumb" with wonder. (2.) The effect of great calamity is often to prevent utterance. Nothing is more natural or common than profound silence when we go to the house of mourning. "It is the lesser cares only that speak; the greater ones find not language."

"Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent."

(3.) They might not have known what to say. They had come to sympathize with him, and to offer consolation. But their anticipated topics of consolation may have been seen to be inappropriate. The calamity was greater than they had before witnessed. The loss of property and children; the deep humiliation of a man who had been one of the most dis-

tinguished of the land; the severity of his bodily sufferings, and his changed and haggard appearance, constituted so great a calamity, that the usual topics of conversation did not meet the case. What *they* had to say, was the result of careful observation on the usual course of events, and it is by no means improbable that they had never before witnessed sorrows so keen, and that they now saw that their maxims would by no means furnish consolation for *such* a case. (4.) They seem to have been very early thrown into doubt in regard to the real character of Job. They had regarded him as a pious man, and had come to him under that impression. But his great afflictions seem soon to have shaken their confidence in his piety, and to have led them to ask themselves whether so great a sufferer *could* be the friend of God. Their subsequent reasonings show that it was with them a settled opinion that the righteous would be prospered, and that very great calamities were proof of great criminality in the sight of God. It was not inconsistent with this belief to suppose that the righteous might be slightly afflicted, but when they saw *such* sorrows, they supposed they were altogether beyond what God could send upon his friends; and with this doubt on their minds, and this change in their views, they knew not what to say. How *could* they console him when it was their settled belief that great sufferings were proof of great guilt? They could say nothing which would not seem to be a departure from this, unless they assumed that he had been a hypocrite, and should administer reproof and rebuke for his sins. (5.) In this state of things to administer *rebu*ke would seem to be cruel. It would aggravate the sorrows which already were more than he could bear. They did, therefore, what the friends of the afflicted are often compelled to do in regard to specific sufferings; they kept silence. As they could not comfort him, they would not

aggravate his grief. All they could have said would probably have been unmeaning generalities which would not meet his case, or would have been sententious maxims which would imply that he was a sinner and a hypocrite; and they were therefore dumb, until the bitter complaint of Job himself (ch. iii.) gave them an opportunity to state the train of thought which had passed through their minds during this protracted silence. How often do similar cases occur now—cases where consolation seems almost impossible, and where *any* truths which might be urged, except the most abstract and unmeaning generalities, would tend only to aggravate the sorrows of the afflicted! When calamity comes upon a person as the result of his sins; when property is taken away which has been gained in an unlawful manner; when a friend dies, leaving no evidence that he was prepared; when it is impossible to speak of that friend without recalling the memory of his irreligious, prayerless, or dissolute life, how difficult is it to administer consolation! How often is the Christian friend constrained to close his lips in silence, or utter only *torturing* general truths that can give no consolation, or refer to facts which will tend only to open the wound in the heart deeper! To be silent at such times is all that can be done; or to commend the sufferer in humble prayer to God, an expedient which seems not to have been resorted to either by Job or his friends. It is remarkable that Job is not represented as calling upon God for support, and it is as remarkable that his friends during these seven days of silent grief did not commend the case of their much afflicted friend to the Father of mercies. Had *Job* prayed, he might have been kept from much of the improper feeling to which he gave vent in the following chapter; had *they* prayed, they might have obtained much more just views of the government of God than they had hitherto possessed.



## CHAPTER III.

## ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

*Job's Complaint.*

THIS chapter introduces the argument of the poem, which continues to ch. xlii. 6. The pathetic lamentation of Job, and his latter complaint, furnishes an occasion for the reply of Eliphaz in ch. iv., and gives rise to the argument which follows. Thus far his friends, overwhelmed with astonishment and grief, had said nothing. They knew not what to say to comfort him, and they felt that if they said anything, and expressed the convictions of their own minds, it could only give him pain. They were, therefore, silent. The lamentation and complaint of Job, however, furnished them with an opportunity to express their convictions fully, and in the following chapters they enter on the argument with great earnestness.

This chapter contains Job's complaint. At the end of seven days, when he saw no prospect of relief from his sufferings, and when his friends did not utter one word of condolence, he unburdens his heart in the language of bitter lamentation and despair. *Noyes*. The complaint comprises the following parts or subjects:—

He curses the day in which he was born, using a great variety of strong, rash, and violent language, to show the deep detestation with which he regarded it—wishing that that day had perished, that night had rested on it, that it should not be numbered among the days of the year, and that it should be an accursed day never to be mentioned but with some expression of abhorrence: vs. 1—9.

He states the reason why he regarded it as accursed. It was because it did not prevent his birth, and thus save him from sorrow and despair: ver. 10.

He asks with impatience, why he did not die as soon as he was born? Why were any pains taken to keep him alive? Why was he reserved to endure these bitter sorrows? vs. 11, 12.

He states with great beauty, what would have occurred if he had died as soon as he was born. Then he would have been at rest. He would have slept as princes and kings do. He would have been as unconscious of suffering as infants are who are not born. He would have been in that peaceful abode where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest; where the chains of slavery are broken, and the servant is as free as his master: vs. 13—20.

He asks, in the language of bitter complaint, why life is given to a man in misery, who does not desire it, and who longs impatiently for death? This implies a bitter complaint against God. Before this nothing had escaped him reflecting on God; but here in the language of deep and excited feeling, he allows himself to insinuate that God is unjust and unkind, vs. 20—23.

In the close of his complaint, he discloses the fact that he had greatly feared these sufferings, and that in the time of his prosperity he had not felt that he was secure. He had had an apprehension of a reverse of circumstances, and now the worst that he had dreaded had come. vs. 24—26.

There is, undoubtedly, much in this complaint that is irreverent, impatient, and improper. Yet the author of the poem has contrived to secure our sympathy in favour of the sufferer by the narrative which precedes. Had the book commenced here, all would at once conclude that Job knew nothing of proper feelings of submission, and was wholly a stranger to true piety. But we hear this language when by the previous narrative we are disposed to pity the sufferer. He has been subjected to trials of the severest nature, and has found no one to condole with him, or to express a sentiment of kindness in his favor. Under this excess of suffering, and wrought up to this height of feeling, we are more inclined to pity him than to censure him for his obviously irreverent language. Such is the art of the poem, that these complaints do not strike us as coming from a bad man, but as being the effect of momentary impatience and passion. They are not expressions indicating settled character and principles, but they are the result of the circumstances in which he was placed. They are felt to be such as not to demonstrate that he is a hypocrite, but such as to show that while he was in the main "a man of integrity, he was too confident of it; a man oppressed with almost every imaginable evil, both corporeal and mental, and hurried beyond the limits of virtue by the strong influence of pain and affliction."—*Louth's Lectures on Hebrew Poetry*, xxxiv.

**A**FTER this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day.

1. *After this*. Dr. Good renders this, "at length." It means after the long silence of his friends, and after he saw that there was no prospect of relief or

of consolation. ¶ *Opened Job his mouth*. The usual formula in Hebrew to denote the commencement of a speech. See Matt. v. 2. Schultens contends that it

2 And Job <sup>1</sup> spake, and said,  
3 Let <sup>a</sup> the day perish wherein

<sup>1</sup> answered.

<sup>a</sup> c. 10. 18, &c.; Je. 20. 14.

means boldness and vehemency of speech, *παρόρση*, or an opening of the mouth for the purpose of accusing, expostulating, or complaining; or to begin to utter some sententious, profound, or sublime maxim; and in support of this he appeals to Ps. lxxviii. 2; and Prov. viii. 6. There is probably, however, nothing more intended than to begin to speak. It is in accordance with Oriental views, where an act of speaking is regarded as a grave and important matter, and is entered on with much deliberation. Blackwell (Life of Homer, p. 43) remarks that the Turks, Arabs, Hindoos, and the Orientals in general, have little inclination to society and to general conversation, that they seldom speak, and that their speeches are sententious and brief, unless they are much excited. With such men, to make a speech is a serious matter, as is indicated by the manner in which their discourses are commonly introduced: "I will open my mouth," or, they "opened the mouth," implying great deliberation and gravity. This phrase occurs often in Homer, Hesiod, Orpheus, and in Virgil (Comp. *Æn.* vi. 75), as well as in the Bible. See Burder, in Rosenmüller's *Morgenland*, in *loc.* ¶ And *cursed his day*. The word rendered *curse* here (לָקַח) is different from that used in ch. i. 11; ii. 9. It is the proper word to denote *to curse*. The Syriac adds, "the day in which he was born." A similar expression occurs in Klopstock's *Messias*, Ges. iii.

"Wenn nun, aller Kinder beraubt, die verzweifelnde Mutter,  
Wuthend dem Tag, an dem sie gebahr, und  
gebohren ward, fluchet."

"When now of all her children robb'd, the  
desperate mother, enraged, curses the day in  
which she bare, and was borne."

2. And Job *spake*. Marg. as in Hebrew, *answered*. The Hebrew word here used (אָמַר) to *answer*, is often employed when one commences a discourse, even though no question had preceded. It is somewhat in the sense of replying to

I was born, and the night *in which* it was said, There is a *mar* child conceived.

a subject, or of speaking in a case where a question *might* appropriately be asked. Isa. xiv. 10 (Heb.); Zech. iii. 4; Deut. xxvi. 5 (Heb.); xxvii. 14 (Heb.) The word to *answer* (ἀποκρίνομαι) is frequently used in this way in the New Testament. Matt. xvii. 4, 17; xxviii. 5; Mark ix. 5; x. 51, *et al.*

3. *Let the day perish*. "Perish the day! O that there had never been such a day! Let it be blotted from the memory of man!" There is something singularly bold, sublime, and *wild* in this exclamation. It is a burst of feeling where there had been long restraint, and where now it breaks forth in the most vehement and impassioned manner. The word *perish* here (נָפַח) expresses the *optative*, and indicates strong desire. So the LXX, Ἀπόλοιτο, *may it perish*, or be destroyed. Comp. ch. x. 18. "O that I had given up the ghost." Dr. Good says of this exclamation, "There is nothing that I know of, in ancient or modern poetry, equal to the entire burst, whether in the wildness and horror of the imprecations, or the terrible sublimity of its imagery." The boldest and most animated of the Hebrew poets have imitated it, and have expressed themselves in almost the same language, in scenes of distress. A remarkably similar expression of feeling is made by Jeremiah.

Cursed be the day wherein I was born!

Let not the day wherein my mother bare me  
be blessed!

Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my  
father, saying,

'A man child is born unto thee,'

Making him very glad.

Be that man as the cities which JEHOVAH over-  
threw and repented not!

Yea, let him hear the outcry in the morning,  
And the lamentation at noon day!

Ch. xx. 14-16.

The sense of this expression in Job is plain. He wished there never had been such a day, and then he would not have been born. It is impossible to vindicate these expressions in Job and Jeremiah, unless it be on the supposition that it is highly wrought poetic language, caused

by sorrow so acute that it could not be expressed in prose. We are to remember, however, if this seems to us inconsistent with the existence of true piety, that Job had far less light than we have; that he lived at an early period of the world, when the views of the divine government were obscure, and that he was not sustained by the hopes and promises which the Christian possesses now. What light he had was probably that of tradition, and of the result of careful observation on the course of events. His topics of consolation must have been comparatively few. He had few or no promises to sustain him. He had not had before him, as we have, the example of the patient Redeemer. His faith was not sustained by those strong assurances which we have of the perfect rectitude of the divine government. Before we blame him too severely, we must place ourselves in imagination in his circumstances, and ask what *our* pity would have done under the trials which afflicted *him*. Yet, with all allowances, it is not possible to vindicate this language; and while we cannot but admire its force and sublimity, and its unequalled power and boldness in expressing strong passion, we at the same time feel that there was a want of proper submission and patience. It is the impassioned language of a man who felt that he could bear no more; and there can be no doubt that it gave to Satan the hope of his anticipated triumph. ¶ *And the night in which it was said.* Dr. Good renders this, "And the night which shouted!" Noyes, "And the night which said." So Gesenius and Rosenmüller, "Perish the night which said, A man child is conceived." The Vulgate renders it, "The night in which it was said:" the LXX, "That night in which they said." The Chaldee paraphrases the verse, "Perish the day in which I was born, and the angel who presided over my conception." Scott, quoted by Good, translates it, "The night which hailed the new-born man." The language throughout this imprecation is that in which the night is *personified*, and addressed as if it were made glad by the birth of a son. So Schultens says,

"Inducitur enim *Nox* illa quasi *conscia mysterii, et exultans ob spem prolis virilis.*" Such personifications of day and night are common among the Arabs. See Schultens. It is a representation of day and night as "sympathizing with the joys and sorrows of mankind, and is in the truest vein of Oriental poetry." ¶ *There is a man child conceived.* Heb. נָר, *a man.* Comp. John xvi. 21. The word "conceived" Dr. Good renders "brought forth." So Herder translates it. The LXX, Ἰδὼν ἄρσεν — *le, a male.* The common translation expresses the true sense of the original. The joy at the birth of a male in Oriental countries is much greater than that at the birth of a female. A remarkable instance of an imprecation on the day of one's birth is found in a Mohammedan book of modern times, in which the expressions are almost precisely the same as in Job. "Malek er Nasser Daud, prince of some tribes in Palestine, from which, however, he had been driven, after many adverse fortunes, died in a village near Damascus, in the year 1258. When the crusaders had desolated his country, he deplored its misfortunes and his own in a poem, from which Abulfeda (Annals, p. 560) has quoted the following passage. 'O, that my mother had remained unmarried all the days of her life! That God had determined no lord or consort for her! O, that when he had destined her to an excellent, mild, and wise prince, she had been one of those whom he had created barren; that she might never have known the happy intelligence that she had borne a man or woman! Or that, when she had carried me under her heart, I had lost my life at my birth; and if I had been born, and had seen the light, that, when the congratulating people hastened on their camels, I had been gathered to my fathers.'" The Greeks and the Romans had their unlucky days *ἡμέραι ἀποφράδες, dies infausti*; that is, days which were unpropitious, or in which they expected no success in any enterprise or any enjoyment. Tacitus (Annals, xiv. 12) mentions that the Roman Senate, for the purpose of flattering Nero, decreed that the birthday of Agrippina should be regarded as an

4 Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it.

5 Let darkness and the shadow

accursed day: ut dies natalis Agrippinæ inter nefastos esset. See Rosenmüller, *Alt. u. neue Morgenland*, in *loc.* Expressions also similar to those before us occur in Ovid, particularly in the following passage, *Epist. ad Ibin.*

"Natus es infelix (ita Dii voluere), nec ulla  
Commoda nascenti stella, levisve fuit.  
Lux quoque natalis, ne quid nisi triste videres,  
Turpis, et inductis nubibus atra fuit.  
Sedit in adverso nocturnus culmine bubo,  
Funereoque graves edidit ore sonos."

We have now similar days, which by common superstition are regarded as unlucky or inauspicious. The wish of Job seems to be, that the day of his birth might be regarded as one of those days.

4. *Let that day be darkness.* Let it not be day; or, O, that it had not been day, that the sun had not risen, and that it had been night. ¶ *Let not God regard it from above.* The word rendered here "regard" (רָאָה) means properly to seek or inquire after, to ask for or demand. Dr. Good renders it here, "Let not God inclose it;" but this meaning is not found in the Hebrew. Noyes renders it literally, "Let not God seek it." Herder, "Let not God inquire after it." The sense may be, either that Job wished the day sunk beneath the horizon, or in the deep waters by which he conceived the earth to be surrounded, and prays that God would not seek it and bring it from its dark abode; or he desired that God would never inquire after it, that it might pass from his remembrance and be forgotten. What we value, we would wish God to remember and bless; what we dislike, we would wish him to forget. This seems to be the idea here. Job hated that day, and he wished all other beings to forget it. He wished it blotted out, so that even God would never inquire after it, but regard it as if it had never been. ¶ *Neither let the light shine upon it.* Let it be utter darkness; let

of death stain<sup>1</sup> it; let a cloud dwell upon it;<sup>2</sup> let the blackness of the day terrify it.

<sup>1</sup> or, *challenge.*

<sup>2</sup> or, *let them terrify it, as those who have a bitter day.* Am. 8. 10.

not a ray ever reveal it. It will be seen here that Job first curses *the day*. The amplification of the curse with which he commenced in the first part of verse third continues through the fourth and fifth verses; and then he returns to the *night*, which also (in the latter part of ver. 3) he wished to be cursed. His desires in regard to that unhappy night he expresses in vs. 6—10.

5. *Let darkness and the shadow of death.* The Hebrew word, מָוֶת, *tāl-māvèth*, is exceedingly musical and poetical. It is derived from זָל, *tāl*, a shadow, and מָוֶת, *māvèth*, death; and is used to denote the deepest darkness. See Notes on Isa. ix. 2. It occurs frequently in the sacred Scriptures. Comp. Job x. 21, 22; Ps. xxiii. 4; Job xii. 22; xvi. 16; xxiv. 17; xxxiv. 22; xxviii. 17; Amos v. 8; Jer. ii. 6. It is used to denote the abode of departed spirits described by Job as "a land of darkness, as darkness itself; of the shadow of death without any order, and where the light is as darkness." Job x. 21, 22. The idea seems to have been, that *death* was a dark and gloomy object that obstructed all light, and threw a baleful shade afar, and that that melancholy shade was thrown afar over the regions of the dead. The sense here is, that Job wished the deepest conceivable darkness to rest upon it. ¶ *Stain it.* Marg. or *challenge.* Vulg. *obscure it.* LXX, "take, or occupy it," ἑκλάβου. Dr. Good, *crush it.* Noyes, *redeem it.* Herder, *seize it.* This variety of interpretation has arisen in part from the twofold signification of the word here used, זָל. The word means either to *redeem*, or to *defile, pollute, stain*. These senses are not very closely connected, and I know not how the one has grown out of the other, unless it be that redemption was accomplished with blood, and that the frequent sprinkling of

blood on an altar rendered it defiled, or unclean. In one sense, blood thus sprinkled would purify, when it took away sin; in another, it would render an object unclean or polluted. Gesenius says, that the latter signification occurs only in the later Hebrew. If the word here means to *redeem*, the sense is, that Job wished darkness to resume its dominion over the day, and redeem it to itself, and thus wholly to exclude the light. If the word means to defile or pollute, the sense is, that he desired the death-shade to stain the day wholly black; to take out every ray of light, and to render it wholly obscure. Gesenius renders it in the former sense. The sense which Reiske and Dr. Good give to the word, "crush it," is not found in the Hebrew. The word means to defile, stain, or pollute, in the following places—viz.: it is rendered *pollute* and *polluted* in Mal. i. 7, 12; Zeph. iii. 1; Lam. iv. 14; Ezra ii. 62; Neh. vii. 64; *defile* or *defiled* in Isa. lix. 3; Dan. i. 8; Neh. xiii. 29; and *stain* in Isa. lxiii. 3. It seems to me that this is the sense here, and that the meaning has been well explained by Schultens, that Job wished that his birthday should be involved in a deep *stain*, that it should be covered with clouds and storms, and made dark and dismal. This imprecation referred not only to the day on which he was born, but to each succeeding birthday. Instead of its being on its return a bright and cheerful day, he wished that it might be annually a day of tempests and of terrors; a day so marked that it would excite attention as peculiarly gloomy and inauspicious. It was a day whose return conveyed no pleasure to his soul, and which he wished no one to observe with gratitude or joy. ¶ *Let a cloud dwell upon it.* There is, as Dr. Good and others have remarked, much sublimity in this expression. The Hebrew word rendered *a cloud* (ענן) occurs nowhere else in this form. It is the feminine form of the word ענן, *a cloud*, and is used *collectively* to denote *clouds*; that is, cloud piled on cloud; clouds "condensed, impacted, heaped together" (Dr Good), and hence the gathered tempest, the clouds assembled

deep and dark, and ready to burst forth in the fury of a storm. Theodotion renders it, *συννεμία*, *assembled clouds*; and hence darkness. The LXX render it γνόφος, *tempest*, or *thick darkness*. So Jerome, *caligo*. The word rendered *dwell upon it* (שָׁכַן) means properly to *settle down*, and there to abide or dwell. Perhaps the original notion was that of fixing a tent, and so Schultens renders it, *Tentorium figit super eo Nubes*, "Let the cloud pitch its tent over it;" rendered by Dr. Good, "The gathered tempest pavilion over it!" "This is an image," says Schultens, "common among the Arabs." The sense is, that Job wished clouds piled on clouds to settle down on the day permanently, to make that day their abode, and to involve it in deep and eternal night. ¶ *Let the blackness of the day terrify it.* Marg., "Or, *Let them terrify it as those who have a bitter day.*" There has been great variety in the interpretation of this passage. Dr. Good renders it, "The blasts of noontide terrify it." Noyes, "Let whatever darkens the day terrify it." Herder, "The blackness of misfortune terrify it." Jerome, *Et involvatur amaritudine*, "let it be involved in bitterness." The LXX, *καταραζέιν ἢ ἡμέρα*, "let the day be cursed." This variety has arisen from the difficulty of determining the sense of the Hebrew word used here, and rendered "blackness," כְּהִימָה. If it is supposed to be derived from the word כָּמַר, *kāmār*, to be warm, to be hot, to burn, then it would mean the deadly heats of the day, the dry and sultry blasts which prevail so much in sandy deserts.—Some writers suppose that there is a reference here to the poisonous wind Samum or Samiel, which sweeps over those deserts, and which is so much dreaded in the heat of summer. "Men as well as animals are often suffocated with this wind. For during a great heat, a current of air often comes which is still hotter; and when men and animals are so exhausted that they almost faint away with the heat, it seems that this little addition quite deprives them of breath.—When a man is suffocated with this wind, or when, as

6 *As for that night, let darkness seize upon it; let it not be* <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> or, *rejoice among.*

they say, his heart is burst, blood is said to flow from his nose and ears two hours after his death. The body is said to remain long warm, to swell, to turn blue and green, and if the arm or leg is taken hold of to raise it up, the limb is said to come off." Burder's Oriental Customs, No. 176. From the testimony of recent travellers, however, it would seem that the injurious effects of this wind have been greatly exaggerated. If this interpretation be the true one, then Job wished the day of his birth to be frightful and alarming, as when such a poisonous blast should sweep along all day, and render it a day of terror and dread. But this interpretation does not well suit the parallelism. Others, therefore, understand by the word, *obscurations*, or whatever darkens the day. Such is the interpretation of Gesenius, Bochart, Noyes, and some others. According to this, the reference is to eclipses or fearful storms which cover the day in darkness. The noun here is not found elsewhere; but the verb *קָכַר*, is used in the sense of being black and dark in Lam. v. 10: "Our skin was black like an oven, because of the terrible famine;" or perhaps more literally, "Our skin is scorched as with a furnace, from the burning heat of famine." That which is burnt becomes black, and hence the word may mean that which is dark, obscure, and gloomy. This meaning suits the parallelism, and is a sense which the Hebrew will bear. Another interpretation regards the *כ*, *kaph*, as a prefix before the word *bitterness*, and then the sense is, "according to the bitterness of the day;" that is, the greatest calamities which can happen to a day. This sense is found in several of the ancient versions, and is adopted by Rosenmüller. To me it seems that the second interpretation proposed best suits the connexion, and that the meaning is, that Job wished that everything which could render the day gloomy and obscure might rest upon it. The Chaldee adds here, "Let

joined unto the days of the year, let it not come into the number of the months.

it be as the bitterness of day—the grief with which Jeremiah was afflicted in being cut off from the house of the Sanctuary, and Jonah in being cast into the sea of Tarshish."

6. *As for that night.* Job, having cursed the *day*, proceeds to utter a malediction on the *night* also. See ver. 3. This malediction extends to ver. 10. ¶ *Let darkness seize upon it.* Heb. Let it take it. Let deep and horrid darkness seize it as its own. Let no star arise upon it; let it be unbroken and uninterrupted gloom. The word *darkness*, however, does not quite express the force of the original. The word here used (לַיְלָה) is poetic, and denotes darkness more intense than is denoted by the word which is usually rendered darkness (חָשֶׁךְ). It is a darkness accompanied with clouds and with a tempest. Herder understands it as meaning, that darkness should seize upon that night and bear it away, so that it should not be joined to the months of the year. So the Chaldee. But the true sense is, that Job wished so deep darkness to possess it, that no star would rise upon it; no light whatever be seen. A night like this Seneca beautifully describes in Agamemnon, vs. 661, seq.

"Nox prima cælum sparserat stellis,  
Cum subito luna conditur, stellæ cadunt;  
In astra pontus tollitur, et cælum petit.  
Nec una nox est, densa tenebras obruit  
Caligo, et omni luce subducta, fretum  
Cælumque miscet.  
Premunt tenebræ lumina, et diræ stygis  
Inferna nox est."

¶ *Let it not be joined unto the days of the year.* Marg. *rejoice among.* So Good and Noyes render it. The word used here (אֶתְּ), according to the present pointing, is the apocopated future of *אֶתְּ*, to rejoice, to be glad. If the pointing were different (אֶתְּ), it would be the future of *אֶתְּ*, to be one; to be united, or joined to. The Masoretic points are of no authority, and the interpretation

14 With kings and counsellors of the earth, which built deso-

matter of question, and will be considered more fully in the examination of the passage in ch. xix. 25—27. ¶ *Then had I been at rest.* Instead of the troubles and anxieties which I now experience. That is, he would have been lying in calm and honourable repose with the kings and princes of the earth.

14. *With kings.* Reposing as they do. This is the language of calm meditation on what would have been the consequence if he had died when he was an infant. He seems to delight to dwell on it. He contrasts it with his present situation. He pauses on the thought that that would have been an honourable repose. He would have been numbered with kings and princes. Is there not here a little spice of ambition even in his sorrows and humiliation? Job had been an eminently rich man; a man greatly honoured; an emir; a magistrate; one in whose presence even princes refrained talking, and before whom nobles held their peace, ch. xxix. 9. Now he was stripped of his honors, and made to sit in ashes. But had he died when an infant, he would have been numbered with kings and counsellors, and would have shared their lot. Death is repulsive; but Job takes comfort in the thought that he would have been associated with the most exalted and honourable among men. There is some consolation in the idea that when an infant dies he is associated with the most honored and exalted of the race: there is consolation in the reflection that when we die we shall lie down with the good and the great of all past times, and that though our bodies shall moulder back to dust, and be forgotten, we are sharing the same lot with the most beautiful, lovely, wise, pious, and mighty of the race. To Christians there is the richest of all consolations in the thought that they will sleep as their Saviour did in the tomb, and that the grave, naturally so repulsive, has been made sacred and even attractive by being the place where the Redeemer reposed.

ate <sup>d</sup> places for themselves;

d.c. 15. 28.

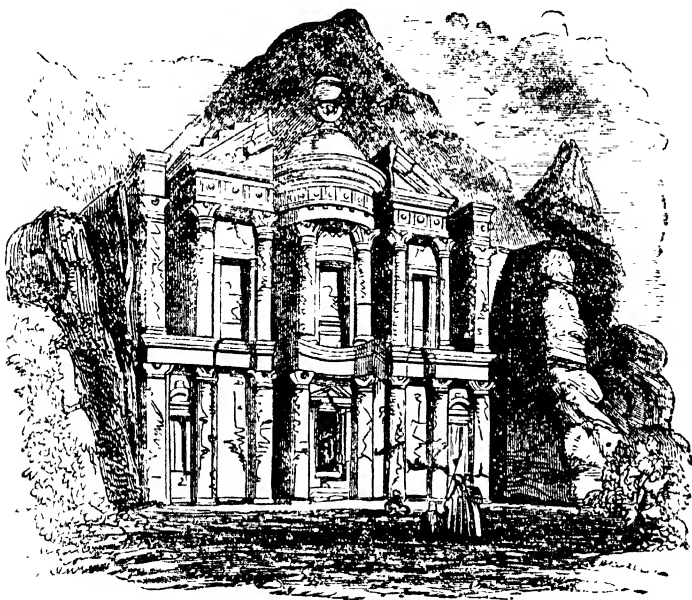
Why should we tremble to convey  
Their bodies to the tomb?  
There the dear flesh of Jesus lay,  
And left a long perfume.

The graves of all his saints he blessed,  
And softened every bed:  
Where should the dying members rest,  
But with the dying Head?

*And counsellors of the earth.* Great and wise men, who were qualified to give counsel to kings in times of emergency. *Which built desolate places for themselves.* Gesenius supposes that the word here used (קִרְבָּנוֹת) means palaces which would soon be in ruins. So Noyes renders it, "Who build up for themselves—ruins!" That is, they build splendid palaces, or perhaps tombs, which are destined soon to fall to ruin. Dr. Good renders it, "Who restored to themselves the ruined wastes;" that is, the princes who restored to their former magnificence the ruins of ancient cities, and built their palaces in them. But it seems to me that the idea is different. It is, that kings constructed for their own burial magnificent tombs or mausoleums, which were lonely and desolate places, where they might lie in still and solemn grandeur. Comp. Notes on Isa. xiv. 18. Sometimes these were immense excavations from rocks; and sometimes they were stupendous structures built as tombs. What more desolate and lonely places could be conceived than the Pyramids of Egypt—reared probably as the burial-places of kings? What more lonely and solitary than the small room in the centre of one of those immense structures, where the body of the monarch is supposed to have been deposited? And what more emphatic than the expression—though "so nearly pleonastic that it may be omitted"—(Noyes)—"for themselves"? To my view, that is far from being pleonastic. It is full of emphasis. The immense structure was made for *them*. It was not to be a common burial-place; it was not for the public good; it was not to be an abode for the living and a contributor to their happiness; it was a matter of

supreme selfishness and pride—an immense structure built only FOR THEMSELVES. With such persons lying in their places of lonely grandeur, Job felt it would be an honor to be associated. Compared with his present condition, it was one of dignity; and he earnestly wished that it might have been his lot thus early to have been consigned to the fellowship of the dead. It may be some confirmation of this view to remark, that the land of Edom, near which Job is supposed to have lived, contains at this day some of the most wonderful sepulchral monuments of the world.

Comp. Notes on Isa. xvi. 1. The following engravings, taken from Laborde, will give an illustration of those tombs. It is true that those sepulchres are of a much later date than the time of Job, nor could the art of sculpture in his time have been such as these specimens exhibit; but it is interesting to find such illustrations of the general idea in the very region where Job lived. The following engraving is the façade of a tomb in Petra, in Idumea, and will illustrate the magnificence which was sometimes shown in their structure.



TOMB AT PETRA.—FROM LABORDE.

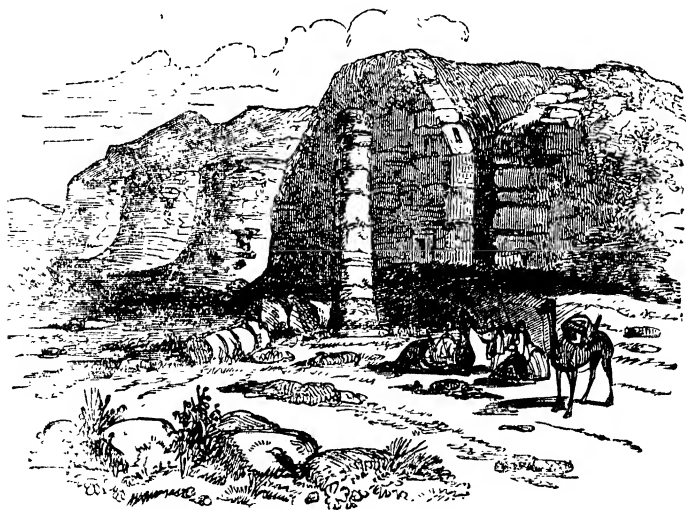
The following engraving will illustrate the interior of such tombs. It is also from Petra





INTERIOR OF A TOMB AT PETRA.—FROM LABORDE.

The annexed engraving shows the entrances to several of those tombs excavated in the side of the rocks. Such sepulchres abound in Persia and on the banks of the Nile in Egypt opposite to Thebes.



SEPULCHRAL CAVES IN THE CLIFFS OF WADY MOUSA (IN MOUNT SEIR.)  
FROM LABORDE.

15 Or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver :

16 Or as an hidden untimely birth<sup>c</sup> I had not been; as infants

<sup>c</sup> Ps. 58. 8.

15. *Or with princes that had gold.* That is, he would have been united with the rich and the great. Is there not here too also a slight evidence of the fondness for wealth, which might have been one of the errors of this good man? Would it not seem that such was his estimate of the importance of being esteemed rich, that he would count it an honor to be united with the affluent in death, rather than be subjected to a condition of poverty and want among the living? ¶ *Who filled their houses with silver.* Rosenmüller supposes that there is reference here to the custom among the ancients of burying treasures with the dead, and that the word *houses* refers to the tombs or mausoleums which they erected. That such a custom prevailed there can be no doubt. Josephus informs us that large quantities of treasure were buried in the tomb with David, which afterwards was taken out for the supply of an army; and Schultens (*in loc.*) says that the custom prevailed extensively among the Arabs. The custom of burying valuable objects with the dead was practised also among the aborigines of America, and is to this day practised in Africa. If this be the sense here, then the idea of Job was, that he would have been in his grave united with those who even there were accompanied with wealth, rather than suffering the loss of all his property as he was among the living.

16. *Or as an hidden untimely birth.* As an abortion which is hid, or concealed; that is, which is soon removed from the sight. So the Psalmist, lviii. 8:

As a snail which melteth, let them dissolve;  
As the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun.

Sept. *ἐκρωμα*, the same word which is used by Paul in 1 Cor. xv. 8, with reference to himself. See Notes on that place. ¶ *I had not been.* I should have

*which* never saw light.

17 There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the<sup>1</sup> weary be at rest.

<sup>1</sup> *wearied in strength.*

perished; I should not have been a man, as I now am, subject to calamity. The meaning is, that he would have been taken away and concealed, as such an untimely birth is, and that he would never have been numbered among the living and the suffering. ¶ *As infants which never saw light.* Job expresses here no opinion of their future condition, or on the question whether such infants had immortal souls. He is simply saying that his lot would have been as theirs was, and that he would have been saved from the sorrows which he now experienced.

17. *There the wicked cease from troubling.* In the grave—where kings and princes and infants lie. This verse is often applied to heaven, and the language is such as will express the condition of that blessed world. But as used by Job, it had no such reference. It relates only to the grave. It is language which beautifully expresses the condition of the dead, and the *desirableness* even of an abode in the tomb. They who are there, are free from the vexations and annoyances to which men are exposed in this life. The wicked cannot torture their limbs by the fires of persecution, or wound their feelings by slander, or oppress and harass them in regard to their property, or distress them by thwarting their plans, or injure them by impugning their motives. All is peaceful and calm in the grave, and *there* is a place where the malicious designs of wicked men cannot reach us. The object of this verse and the two following is, to show the *reasons* why it was desirable to be in the grave, rather than to live and to suffer the ills of this life. We are not to suppose that Job referred exclusively to his own case in all this. He is describing, in general, the happy condition of the dead, and we have no reason to think that he had been particularly annoyed by wicked men. But

18 *There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor.*

the pious often are; and hence it should be a matter of gratitude that there is *one* place, at least, where the wicked cannot annoy the good; and where the persecuted, the oppressed, and the slandered may lie down in peace. ¶ *And there the weary be at rest.* Marg. *Wearyed in strength.* The margin is in accordance with the Hebrew. The meaning is, those whose strength is exhausted, who are worn down by the toils and cares of life, and who feel the need of rest. Never was more beautiful language employed than occurs in this verse. What a charm such language throws even over the grave—like strewing flowers, and planting roses around the tomb! Who should fear to die, if prepared, when such is to be the condition of the dead? Who is there that is not in some way troubled by the wicked—by their thoughtless, ungodly life; by persecution, contempt, and slander? Comp. 2 Peter, ii. 8; Ps. xxxix. 1. Who is there that is not at some time weary with his load of care, anxiety, and trouble. Who is there whose strength does not become exhausted, and to whom rest is not grateful and refreshing? And who is there, therefore, to whom, if prepared for heaven, the grave would not be a place of calm and grateful rest? And though true religion will not prompt us to wish that we had lain down there in early childhood, as Job wished, yet no dictate of piety is violated when we look forward with calm delight to the time when we may repose where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary be at rest. O grave, thou art a peaceful spot! Thy rest is calm; thy slumbers are sweet.

Nor pain, nor grief, nor anxious fear  
Invade thy bounds. No mortal woes  
Can reach the peaceful sleeper here,  
While angels watch the soft repose.

So Jesus slept; God's dying Son  
Passed through the grave, and blest the bed.

18. *There the prisoners rest together.*

19 *The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master.*

Herder translates this, "There the prisoners rejoice in their freedom." The LXX, strangely enough, "There they of old (*οἱ αἰώνιοι*) assembled together (*ὁμοθυμαδὸν*) have not heard the voice of the exactor." The Hebrew word *נָחַ* means to rest, to be quiet, to be tranquil; and the sense is, that they are in the grave freed from chains and oppressions. ¶ *They hear not the voice of the oppressor.* Of him who exacted taxes, and who laid on them heavy burdens, and who imprisoned them for imaginary crimes. He who is bound in chains, and who has no other prospect of release, can look for it in the grave, and will find it there. Similar sentiments are found respecting death in Seneca *ad Marciam*, 20: "Mors omnibus finis, multis remedium, quibusdam votum; hæc servitutem invito domino remittit; hæc captivorum catenas levat; hæc e carcere deducit, quos exire imperium impotens vetuerat; hæc exulibus, in patriam semper animum oculosque tendentibus, ostendit, nihil interesse inter quos quisque jaceat; hæc, ubi res communes fortuna male divisit, et æquo jure genitos alium alii donavit, exæquat omnia; hæc est, quæ nihil quidquam alieno fecit arbitrio; hæc est, in quâ nemo humilitatem suam sensit; hæc est, quæ nulli parvit." The sense in Job is, that all are at liberty in death. Chains no longer bind; prisons no longer incarcerate; the voice of oppression no longer alarms.

19. *The small and great are there.* The old and the young, the high and the low. Death levels all. It shows no respect to age; it spares none because they are vigorous, young, or beautiful. This sentiment has probably been expressed in various forms in all languages, for all men are made deeply sensible of its truth. The classic reader will recall the ancient proverb,

Mors sceptrâ ligonibus sequat,

and the language of Horace,

20 Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter *in* soul;

“Æquū lege Necessitas  
Sortitur insignes et imos.

Omne capax movet urna nomen.

Tristis unda scilicet omnibus,

Quicunque terræ munere vescimur,

Enaviganda, sive reges,

Sive mopes erimus coloni.

Divesne prisco natus ab Inacho

Nil interest, an pauper et infima

De gente sub dio moreris,

Victima nil miserantis Orci.

Omnēs eodem cogimur. Omnium

Versatur urna, serius, ocyus,

Sors exitura.

—Omnes una manet nox,

Et calcanda semel via leti.

Mista senum ac juvenum densantur fœnera

Sœva caput Proserpina fugit.

Pallida mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum ta-  
Regumque turres.”

[Nullum

bernās

¶ *And the servant is free from his master.* Slavery is at an end in the grave. The master can no longer tax the powers of the slave, can no longer scourge him or exact his uncompensated toil. Slavery early existed, and there is evidence here that it was known in the time of Job. But Job did not regard it as a desirable institution; for assuredly that is not desirable from which death would be regarded as a *release*, or where death would be preferable. Men often talk about slavery as a valuable condition of society, and sometimes appeal even to the Scriptures to sustain it; but Job felt that it was *worse than death*, and that the grave was to be preferred because there the slave would be free from his master. The word here used and rendered “free” (חָפְזִי) properly expresses manumission from slavery. See it explained at length in my Notes on Isa. lviii. 6.

20. *Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery.* The word *light* here is used undoubtedly to denote *life*. This verse commences a new part of Job's complaint. It is that God keeps men alive who would prefer to die; that he furnishes them with the means of sustaining existence, and actually preserves them, when they would consider it an inestimable blessing to expire. ~~Schul-~~ *ten's* remarks, on this part of the chapter,

21 Which ‘long’ for death, but it *cometh* not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures;

‘wait.

f Re. 9. 6.

that the tone of Job's complaint is considerably modified. He has given vent to his strong feelings, and the language here is more mild and gentle. Still it implies a reflection on God. It is not the language of humble submission. It contains an implied charge of cruelty and injustice; and it laid the foundation for some of the just reproofs which follow. ¶ *And life unto the bitter in soul.* Who are suffering bitter grief. We use the word *bitter* yet to denote great grief and pain.

21. *Which long for death.* Whose pain and anguish are so great that they would regard it as a privilege to die. Much as men dread death, and much as they have occasion to dread what is beyond, yet there is no doubt that this often occurs. Pain becomes so intense, and suffering so protracted, that they would regard it as a privilege to be permitted to die. Yet that sorrow *must* be intense which prompts to this wish, and usually must be long continued. In ordinary cases, such is the love of life, and such the dread of death and of what is beyond, that men are willing to bear all that human nature can endure rather than meet death. See Notes on ch. ii. 4. This idea has been expressed with unsurpassed beauty by Shakspeare:

“For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,

The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,

The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,

The insolence of office, and the spurns

That patient merit of the unworthy takes,

When he himself might his quietus make

With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,

To grunt and sweat under a weary life,

But that the dread of something after death—

The undiscovered country, from whose bourne

No traveller returns—puzzles the will;

And makes us rather bear those ills we have,

Than fly to others that we know not of.”

HAMLET.

¶ *And dig for it.* That is, express a stronger desire for it than men do who dig for treasures in the earth. Nothing would more forcibly express the intense desire to die than this expression.

22 Which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad, when they can find the grave?

22. *Which rejoice exceedingly.* Heb. "Who rejoice upon joy or exultation" (חִלְצִי) that is, with exceedingly great joy. ¶ *When they can find the grave.* What an expression! How strikingly does it express the intense desire to die, and the depth of a man's sorrow, when it becomes a matter of exultation for him to be permitted to lie down in the corruption and decay of the tomb! A somewhat similar sentiment occurs in Euripides, as quoted by Cicero, Tusc. Quæst. lib. 1, cap. 48:—

"Nam nos decebat, dormum  
Lugere, ubi esset aliquis in lucem editus,  
Humane vite varia reputantes mala;  
At, qui labores morte finisset graves,  
Hunc omni amicis laude et lætitia exsequi."

For it became us to weep over the house where one was introduced to light as we reckoned up the various ills of human life. But it also became his friends to follow with every sentiment of praise and joy him who had finished his heavy toils by death.

23. *Why is light given to a man whose way is hid.* That is, who does not know what way to take, and who sees no escape from the misery that surrounds him. ¶ *Whom God hath hedged in?* See Notes, ch. i. 10. The meaning here is, that God had surrounded him as with a high wall or hedge, so that he could not move freely. Job asks with impatience, why light, i. e., life, should be given to such a man? Why should he not be permitted to die? This closes the complaint of Job, and the remaining verses of the chapter contain a statement of his sorrowful condition, and of the fact that he had now been called to suffer all that he had ever apprehended. In regard to the questions here proposed by Job, (verses 20—23,) we may remark, that there was doubtless much impatience on his part, and not a little improper feeling. The language shows that Job was not absolutely sinless; but let us not harshly blame him. What he says, is a statement of feelings which often pass through the mind, though they

23 *Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?*

g c. 19. 8. Ia. 3. 7.

are not often expressed. Who, in deep and protracted sorrows, has not found such questions rising up in his soul—questions which required all his energy, and all his firmness of principle, and all the strength which he could gain by prayer, to suppress? To the questions themselves, it may be difficult to give an answer; and it is certain that none of the friends of Job furnished a solution of the difficulty. When it is asked why a man is kept in misery on earth, when he would be glad to be released by death, perhaps the following, among others, may be the reasons:—(1.) Those sufferings may be the very means which are needful to develop the true state of the soul. Such was the case with Job. (2.) They may be the proper punishment of sin in the heart, of which the individual was not fully aware, but which may be distinctly seen by God. There may be pride, and the love of ease, and self-confidence, and ambition, and a desire of reputation. Such appear to have been some of the besetting sins of Job. (3.) They are needful to teach true submission, and to show whether a man is willing to resign himself to God. (4.) They may be the very things which are necessary to prepare the individual to die. At the same time that men often desire death, and feel that it would be a relief, it might be to them the greatest possible calamity. They may be wholly unprepared for it. For a sinner, the grave contains no rest; the eternal world furnishes no repose. One design of God in such sorrows may be, to show to the wicked how intolerable will be future pain, and how important it is for them to be ready to die. If they cannot bear the pains and sorrows of a few hours in this short life, how can they endure eternal sufferings? If it is so desirable to be released from the sorrows of the body here, if it is felt that the grave, with all that is repulsive in it, would be a place of repose, how

24 For my sighing cometh before <sup>1</sup> I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters.

<sup>1</sup> *my meat.*

important is it to find some way to be secured from everlasting pains! The true place of release from suffering for a sinner, is not the grave; it is in the pardoning mercy of God, and in that pure heaven to which he is invited through the blood of the cross. In that holy heaven is the only real repose from suffering and from sin; and heaven will be all the sweeter in proportion to the extremity of pain which is endured on earth.

24. *For my sighing cometh before I eat.* Marg. *My meat.* Dr. Good renders this, "Behold! my sighing takes the place of my daily food," and refers to Ps. xlii. 3, as an illustration:—

"My tears are my meat day and night."

So substantially Schultens renders it, and explains it as meaning, "My sighing comes in the manner of my food." *Suspirium ad modum panis veniens*—and supposes it to mean that his sighs and groans were like his daily food; or were constant and unceasing. Dr. Noyes explains it as meaning, "My sighing comes on when I begin to eat, and prevents my taking my daily nourishment;" and appeals to a similar expression in Juvenal, Sat. xiii. 211:—

"*Perpetua anxietas nec mensæ tempore cessat.*"

Rosenmüller gives substantially the same explanation, and remarks, also, that some suppose that the mouth, hands, and tongue of Job were so affected with disease, that the effort to eat increased his sufferings, and brought on a renewal of his sorrows. The same view is given by Origen; and this is probably the correct sense. ¶ *And my roarings.* My deep and heavy groans. ¶ *Are poured out like the waters.* That is, (1.) *in number*—they were like rolling billows, or like the heaving deep. (2.) Perhaps also *in sound* like them. His groans were like the troubled ocean, that can be heard afar. Perhaps, also, (3.) he means to say that

25 For <sup>2</sup> the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is

<sup>2</sup> *I feared a fear, and it came upon me.*

his groans were attended with "a flood of tears," or that his tears were like the waves of the sea. There is some hyperbole in the figure, in whichever way it is understood; but we are to remember, that his feelings were deeply excited, and that the Orientals were in the habit of expressing themselves in a mode, which to us, of more phlegmatic temperament, may seem extravagant in the extreme. We have, however, a similar expression when we say of one that "he burst into a flood of tears."

25. *For the thing which I greatly feared.* Marg., as in the Hebrew, "I feared a fear, and it came upon me." This verse, with the following, has received a considerable variety of exposition. Many have understood it as referring to his whole course of life, and suppose that Job meant to say that he was always apprehensive of some great calamity, such as that which had now come upon him, and that in the time of his highest prosperity he had lived in continual alarm lest his property should be taken away, and lest he should be reduced to penury and suffering. This is the opinion of Drusius and Codurcus. In reply to this, Schultens has remarked, that such a proposition is contrary to all probability; that there was no reason to apprehend that such calamities as he now suffered would come upon him; that they were so unusual that they could not have been anticipated; and that therefore the alarm here spoken of, could not refer to the general tenor of his life. That seems to have been happy and calm, and perhaps, if anything, too tranquil and secure. Most interpreters suppose that it refers to the state in which he was during his trial, and that it is designed to describe the rapid succession of his woes. Such is the interpretation of Rosenmüller, Schultens, Drs. Good, Noyes, Gill, and others. According to this, it means that his calamities came on him in quick succession. He had

come unto me.

26 I was not in safety, neither

no time after one calamity to become composed before another came. When he heard of one misfortune, he naturally dreaded another, and they came on with overwhelming rapidity. If this be the correct interpretation, it means that the source of his lamentation is not merely the greatness of his losses and his trials, considered in the aggregate, but the extraordinary rapidity with which they succeeded each other, thus rendering them much more difficult to be borne. See ch. i. He apprehended calamity, and it came suddenly. When one part of his property was taken, he had deep apprehensions respecting the rest; when all his property was seized or destroyed, he had alarm about his children; when the report came that they were dead, he feared some other affliction still. The sentiment is in accordance with human nature, that when we are visited with severe calamity in one form, we naturally dread it in another. The mind becomes exquisitely sensitive. The affections cluster around the objects of attachment which are left, and they become dear to us. When one child is taken away, our affections cling more closely to the one which survives, and any little illness alarms us, and the value of one object of affection is more and more increased—like the Sibyl's leaves—as another is removed. It is an instinct of our nature, too, to apprehend calamity in quick succession when one comes. "Misfortunes seldom come alone;" and when we suffer the loss of one endeared object, we instinctively feel that there may be a succession of blows that will remove all our comforts from us. Such seems to have been the apprehension of Job.

26. *I was not in safety.* That is, I have, or I had no peace. *שָׁלוֹם*. Sept. *οὐτε εἰρήνευσα*—*I had no peace.* The sense is, that his mind had been disturbed with fearful alarms; or perhaps that at that time he was filled with dread. ¶ *Neither had I rest.* Trouble comes upon me in every form, and I am

had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came.

a stranger wholly to peace. The accumulation of phrases here, all meaning nearly the same thing, is descriptive of a state of great agitation of mind. Such an accumulation is not uncommon in the Bible to denote anything which language can scarcely describe. So in Isa. viii. 22 :

"And they shall look upward;  
And to the earth shall they look;  
And lo! trouble and darkness,  
Gloom, oppression, and deepened darkness."

So Job x. 21, 22:

"To the land of darkness and the death-shade,  
The land of darkness like the blackness of the death-shade,  
Where is no order, and where the light is as darkness."

Thus in the Hamasa (quoted by Dr. Good,) "Death, and devastation, and a remorseless disease, and a still heavier and more terrific family of evils." The Chaldee has made a remarkable addition here, arising from the general design in the author of that paraphrase to explain everything. "Did I not dissemble when the annunciation was made to me respecting the oxen and the asses? Was I not stupid [unalarmed, or unmoved, *שִׁדְוִיָּה*], when the report came about the conflagration? Was I not quiet, when the report came respecting the camels? And did not indignation come, when the report was made respecting my sons?" ¶ *Yet trouble came.* Or rather, "and trouble comes." This is one of the cumulative expressions to denote the rapidity and the intensity of his sorrows. The word rendered *trouble* (*רָיָה*) means properly, trembling, commotion, disquiet. Here it signifies such misery as made him tremble. Once the word means wrath, (Hab. iii. 2;) and it is so understood here by the LXX, who render it *ὀργή*.

In regard to this chapter, containing the first speech of Job, we may remark, that it is impossible to approve the spirit which it exhibits, or to believe that it was acceptable to God. It laid the foundation for the reflections—many

of them exceedingly just—in the following chapters, and led his friends to doubt whether such a man could be truly pious. The spirit which is manifested in this chapter, is undoubtedly far from that calm submission which religion should have produced, and from that which Job had before evinced. That he was, in the main, a man of eminent holiness and patience, the whole book demonstrates; but this chapter is one of the conclusive proofs that he was not absolutely free from imperfection. From the chapter we may learn, (1.) That even eminently good men sometimes give utterance to sentiments which are a departure from the spirit of religion, and which they will have occasion to regret. Such was the case here. There was a language of complaint, and a bitterness of expression, which religion cannot sanction, and which no pious man, on reflection, would approve. (2.) We see the effect of heavy affliction on the mind. It sometimes becomes overwhelming. It is so great that all the ordinary barriers against impatience are swept away. The sufferer is left to utter language of murmuring, and there is the impatient wish that life was closed, or that he had not existed. (3.) We are not to infer that because a man in affliction makes use of some expressions which we cannot approve, and which are not sanctioned by the word of God, that therefore he is not a good man. There may be true piety, yet it may be far from perfection; there may be in general submission to God, yet the calamity may be so overwhelming as to overcome the usual restraints on our corrupt and fallen nature: and when we remember how feeble is our nature at best, and how imperfect is the piety of the holiest of men, we should not harshly judge him who is left to express impatience in his trials, or who gives utterance to sentiments different from those which are sanctioned by the word of God. There has been but one model of pure

submission on earth—the Lord Jesus Christ; and after the contemplation of the best of men in their trials, we can see that there is imperfection *in them*, and that if we would survey absolute perfection in suffering, we must go to Gethsemane and to Calvary. (4.) Let us not make the expressions used by Job in this chapter *our* model in suffering. Let us not suppose that because *he* used such language, that therefore we may also. Let us not infer that because they are found *in the Bible*, that therefore they are right; or that because he was an unusually holy man, that it would be proper for us to use the same language that he did. The fact that this book is a part of the inspired truth of revelation, does not make such language right. All that inspiration does, in such a case, is to secure an exact record of what was actually said; it does not, of necessity, sanction it any more than an accurate historian can be supposed to approve all that he records. There may be important reasons why it should be preserved, but he who makes the record is not answerable for the truth or propriety of what is recorded. The *narrative* is true; the *sentiment* may be false. The historian may state exactly what was said or done: but what was said or done, may have violated every law of truth and justice; and unless the historian expresses some sentiment of approbation, he can in no sense be held answerable for it. So with the narratives in the Bible. Where a sentiment of approbation or disapprobation is expressed, there the sacred writer is answerable for it; in other cases he is answerable only for the correctness of the record. This view of the nature of inspiration will leave us at liberty freely to canvass the speeches made in the book of Job, and make it more important that we compare the sentiments in those speeches with other parts of the Bible, that we may know what to approve, and what was erroneous in Job or his friends.



## CHAPTER IV.

## ANALYSIS OF CHAPTERS IV AND V.

*The first Speech of Eliphaz.*

THE fourth and fifth chapters comprise the speech of Eliphaz in reply to the intemperate language of Job. Hitherto his friends had maintained a profound silence in regard to his afflictions—amazed by the magnitude of his sorrows, and unwilling to break in upon his grief, and perhaps pondering the question whether one who suffered so much could be a good man. See Notes on ch. ii. 13. The bitter complaint of Job, however; his rash and intemperate language; his implied charges against God, seem to have settled the question in the minds of his friends that he could not be a good man—and they proceed to address him in accordance with this belief. Eliphaz—as in the whole series of arguments—opens the discussion. He is the most mild of Job's accusers; yet, though his accusations are conducted with great art, and with a studious regard to urbanity of manner, they are terribly severe. It is not improbable that he was the oldest of the friends of Job, as great respect was shown to the aged in those times, and they were expected to speak first. See ch. xxxii. 6. The speech of Eliphaz consists mainly of the statement of his own observations, that the righteous are prospered, and the wicked punished, in this world; and in solemn advice to Job to return to God, and commit his cause to him. There is not a direct charge of hypocrisy, but it is implied throughout the argument, and the discussion which it brings on leads to this direct charge in some of the subsequent speeches. The argument, which is one of great beauty and power, consists of the following parts:—

1. After duly apologizing for speaking at all, he proceeds to point out the inconsistency of a good man's repining under calamity, and the absurdity of *his* complaining and murmuring, who had so often exhorted others to fortitude. This, to him, is strange and unaccountable, and inevitably leads to the question, whether Job could be a good man, ch. iv. 1—6.

2. He then advances the sentiment that no one ever perished who was innocent, and that the righteous were not cut off, ch. iv. 7—11. He states, as the result of his own observation, that they that plough wickedness and sow iniquity, reap the same. They are destroyed by the blast of God, and consumed by the breath of his nostrils. This sentiment he illustrates by his observation of the ways in which the fierce lion is destroyed; or, perhaps, using the word lion to denote savage and cruel men, he shows how they are cut off, ch. iv. 7—11. This is the main doctrine which he and his friends defend. It is, that misery implies guilt; that great calamities are a proof of hypocrisy or sin; and thus it is insinuated that the wickedness of Job is the cause of his present afflictions.

3. This position Eliphaz proceeds to defend, not only by his own observation, but by a remarkable revelation which he says he had formerly had on this very subject, ch. iv. 12—21. That vision was in the silence of the night. A spirit, whose form he could not discern, was before him, which proclaimed, in a deep and solemn voice, that man could not be more just than God; that even the angels were charged with folly; that men were deeply guilty before him, and that he crushed and destroyed them on account of their transgressions.

4. In confirmation of his views, Eliphaz appeals to the observation of the saints, and again urges his own experience on the subject, ch. v. 1—5. He says that he, himself, had seen the wicked flourishing, but soon he had occasion to observe that they were overwhelmed with calamity. Their children were crushed with sudden death, and their harvest was consumed or laid waste, by the robber. Though they *seemed* to be prosperous, yet he maintained that this was no exception to his general remark that God would punish the wicked in this world, and that calamity was proof of guilt.

5. In regard to affliction in general, he maintains that it is not the work of chance. It does not, says he, spring from the ground. It is appointed and directed by an intelligent Being; and, therefore, he infers it must be designed to punish the wicked, ch. v. 6, 7.

6. In view of the doctrine which he had now advanced, Eliphaz advises Job to commit his cause to God, ch. v. 8—16. He says that he would himself do it, and proceeds to show that submission to God was a duty; that God was great, and did wonderful things; that his Providence was over all events; that he took the wise in their own craftiness, but that he was the protector and defender of him who trusted in him.

7. The argument of Eliphaz concludes with a statement of the happy consequences which would follow from making God his friend, ch. v. 17—27. If there was sincere piety, there would be great benefit in trials. God would support and comfort him; he would deliver him in trouble, and would keep him alive in famine; he would make even the stones of the field and the beasts tributary to his happiness; his family would be preserved and prospered, and he would come to the grave in peace and honor. Eliphaz says that he had seen instances like this, and commends that course to Job—strongly implying throughout that he showed in his trials that he had not the true spirit of religion.

**T**HEN Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,

2 *If we assay* <sup>1</sup> to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? but who can <sup>2</sup> withhold himself from speaking?

3 Behold, thou hast instructed

<sup>1</sup> *a word.*

<sup>2</sup> *refrain from words.*

1. *Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered.* See Notes, ch. ii. 11.

2. *If we assay to commune with thee.*

Marg. *A word.* Heb. וְהִסָּדֵר. "*May we attempt a word with thee?*" This is a gentle and polite apology at the beginning of his speech—an inquiry whether he would take it as unkind if one should adventure on a remark in the way of argument. John, in characterizing the part which Job's three friends respectively take in the controversy, says: "Eliphaz is superior to the others in discernment and delicacy. He begins by addressing Job mildly; and it is not until irritated by opposition that he reckons him among the wicked."

¶ *Wilt thou be grieved?* That is, *Wilt thou take it ill?* Will it be offensive to you, or weary you, or tire your patience? The word used here (וָעָדָה) means to labor, to strive, to weary, to exhaust; and hence, to be weary, to try one's patience, to take anything ill. Here it is the language of courtesy, and is designed to introduce the subsequent remarks in the kindest manner. Eliphaz knew that he was about to make observations which might implicate Job, and he introduced them in as kind a manner as possible. There is nothing abrupt or harsh in his beginning. All is courteous in the highest degree, and is a model for debaters. ¶ *But who can withhold himself from speaking?* Marg. *Refrain from words.* That is, "the subject is so important, the sentiments advanced by Job are so extraordinary, and the principles involved are so momentous, that it is impossible to refrain." There is much delicacy in this. He did not begin to speak merely to make a speech. He professes that

many, and thou hast strengthened <sup>a</sup> the weak hands.

4 Thy words have upholden him that was falling; and thou hast strengthened the <sup>1</sup> feeble knees.

<sup>a</sup> Isa. 35. 3.

¶ *bowing.* He. 12. 12.

he would not have spoken, if he had not been pressed by the importance of the subject, and had not been full of matter. To a great extent, this is a good rule to adopt: not to make a speech unless there are sentiments which weigh upon the mind, and convictions of duty which cannot be repressed.

3. *Behold, thou hast instructed many.* That is, thou hast instructed many how they ought to bear trials, and hast delivered important maxims to them on the great subject of the divine government. This is not designed to be irony, or to wound the feelings of Job. It is intended to recal to his mind the lessons which he had inculcated on others in times of calamity, and to show him how important it was now that he should reduce his own lessons to practice, and show their power in sustaining himself. ¶ *Thou hast strengthened the weak hands.* That is, thou hast aided the feeble. The hands are the instruments by which we accomplish anything, and when they are weak, it is an indication of helplessness.

4. *Thy words have upholden him that was falling.* That is, either falling into sin, or sinking under calamity and trial. The Hebrew will bear either interpretation, but the connexion seems to require us to understand it of one who was sinking under the weight of affliction. ¶ *The feeble knees.* Marg. *bowing.* The knees support the frame. If they fail, we are feeble and helpless. Hence, their being weak, is so often used in the Bible to denote imbecility. The sense is, that Job, in the days of his own prosperity, had exhorted others to submit to God; had counselled them in such a manner as actually to give them support, and that the same views

5. But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.

should now have sustained him which he had so successfully employed in comforting others.

5. *But now it is come upon thee.* That is, calamity; or, the same trial which others have had, and in which thou hast so successfully exhorted and comforted them. A similar sentiment to that which is here expressed, is found in Terence:

"Facile omnes, cum valemus, recta consilia aegrotis damus." And. i. 9.

¶ *It toucheth thee.* That is, affliction has come to yourself. It is no longer a thing about which you can coolly sit down and reason, and on which you can deliver formal exhortations. ¶ *And thou art troubled.* Instead of evincing the calm submission which you have exhorted others to do, your mind is now disturbed and restless. You vent your complaints against the day of your birth, and you charge God with injustice. A sentiment resembling this occurs in Terence, as quoted by Codureus:

"Nonne id flagitium est, te aliis consilium dare, Foris sapere, tibi non posse te auxiliari?"

Something similar to this not unfrequently occurs. It is an easy thing to give counsel to others, and to exhort them to be submissive in trial. It is easy to utter general maxims, and to suggest passages of Scripture on the subject of affliction, and even to impart consolation to others; but when trial comes to ourselves, we often fail to realize the power of those truths to console us. Ministers of the gospel are called officially to impart such consolations, and are enabled to do it. But when the trial comes on *them*, and when they ought, by every solemn consideration, to be able to show the power of those truths in their own case, it sometimes happens that they evince the same impatience and want of submission which they had rebuked in others; and that whatever truth and power there may have been in their instructions, they themselves little felt their force. It is often necessary that he who is appointed

6 *Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, thy hope, and the uprightness of thy ways?*

to comfort the afflicted, should be afflicted himself. Then he can "weep with those who weep;" and hence it is that ministers of the gospel are called quite as much as any other class of men to pass through deep waters. Hence, too, the Lord Jesus became so pre-eminent in suffering, that he might be touched with the feelings of our infirmity, and be qualified to sympathize with us when we are tried. Heb. ii. 14, 17, 18; iv. 15, 16. It is exceedingly important that when they whose office it is to comfort others are afflicted, they should exhibit an example of patience and submission. Then is the time to try their religion; and then they have an opportunity to convince others that the doctrines which they preach are adapted to the condition of weak and suffering man.

6. *Is not this thy fear, thy confidence?*

There has been considerable variety in the interpretation of this verse. Dr. Good renders it,

"Is thy piety then nothing? thy hope Thy confidence? or the uprightness of thy ways?"

Noyes renders it,

"Is not thy fear of God thy hope, And the uprightness of thy ways thy confidence?"

Rosenmüller translates it,

"Is not in thy piety and integrity of life Thy confidence and hope?"

In the Vulgate it is translated, "Where is thy fear, thy fortitude, thy patience, and the integrity of thy ways?" In the Sept., "Is not thy fear founded on folly, and thy hope, and the evil of thy way?"

Castellio translates it,

"Nimirum tantum religionis, quantum expectationis; Quantum spei, tantum habebas integritatis morum."

and the idea, according to his version, is, that he had as much religion as was prompted by the hope of reward; that his piety and integrity were sustained only by his hope, and were not the result of principle; and that of course

7 Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or

where were the righteous cut off?

his religion was purely selfish. If this be the sense, it is designed to be a reproach, and accords with the charge in the question of Satan, (ch. i. 9,) "Doth Job fear God for naught?" Rosenmüller adopts the opinion of Ludovicus de Dieu, and explains it as meaning, "You seem to be a man fearing God, and a man of integrity, and you were led hence to cherish high hopes and expectations; but now you perceive that you were deceived. Your piety was not sincere and genuine, for the truly pious do not thus suffer. Remember therefore that no one perishes, being innocent." Codurcus renders it, "All thy hope was placed in thy religion, and thy expectation in the rectitude of thy ways; consider now who perishes, being innocent?" The true sentiment of the passage has undoubtedly been expressed by Good, Noyes, and Codurcus. The Hebrew rendered *thy fear*, *יָרָא* means, doubtless, *religious fear*, veneration, or piety, and is a word synonymous with *εὐλάβεια*, *εὐσέβεια*, *religion*. The sentiment is, that his confidence or hope was placed in his *religion*—in his fear of God, his respect and veneration for him, and in reliance on the equity of his government. This had been his stay in times past; and this was the subject which was naturally brought before him then. Eliphaz asks whether he should not put his trust in that God still, and not reproach him as unequal and unjust in his administration. ¶ *The uprightness of thy ways*. Heb. The perfection of thy ways. Note ch. i. 1. The idea is, that his hope was founded on the integrity of his life, and on the belief that the upright would be rewarded. The passage may be rendered,

"Is not thy confidence and thy expectation founded on thy religion,  
And on the integrity of thy ways?"

This is the general sentiment which Eliphaz proceeds to illustrate and apply. If this was a just principle, it was natural to ask whether the trials of Job did

not prove that he had no well-grounded reason for such confidence.

7. *Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent?* The object of this question is manifestly to show to Job the inconsistency of the feelings which he had evinced. He claimed to be a righteous man. He had instructed and counselled many others. He had professed confidence in God, and in the integrity of his own ways. It was to have been expected that one with such pretensions would have evinced resignation in the time of trial, and would have been sustained by the recollection of his integrity. The fact, therefore, that Job had thus "fainted," and had given way to impatient expressions, showed that he was conscious that he had not been altogether what he had professed to be. "There must have been," is the meaning of Eliphaz, "something wrong, when such calamities come upon a man, and when his faith gives way in such a manner. It would be contrary to all the analogy of the divine dealings to suppose that such a man as Job had professed to be, could be the subject of overwhelming judgments; for who, I ask, ever perished, being innocent? It is a settled principle of the divine government, that no one ever perishes who is innocent, and that great calamities are a proof of great guilt." This declaration contains the essence of all the positions held by Eliphaz and his colleagues in this argument. This they considered as so established that no one could call it in question, and on the ground of this they inferred that one who experienced such afflictions, no matter what his professions or his apparent piety had been, could not be a good man. This was a point about which the minds of the friends of Job were settled; and though they seem to have been disposed to concede that some afflictions might happen to good men, yet when sudden and overwhelming calamities such as they now witnessed came upon them, they inferred that there must have been cor-

8 Even as I have seen, they <sup>b</sup>

<sup>b</sup> Ga. 6, 7, 8.

responding guilt. Their reasoning on this subject—which runs through the book—perplexed but did not satisfy Job, and was obviously based on a wrong principle. The word *perished* here means the same as cut off, and does not differ much from being overwhelmed with calamity. The whole sentence has a proverbial cast; and the sense is, that when persons were suddenly cut off, it proved that they were not innocent. Job, therefore, it was inferred, could not be a righteous man in these unusual and very peculiar trials. ¶ *Or where were the righteous cut off?* That is, by heavy judgment; by any special and direct visitation. Eliphaz could not mean that the righteous did not die—for he could not be insensible to that fact; but he must have referred to sudden calamities. This kind of reasoning is common—that when men are afflicted with great and sudden calamities they must be peculiarly guilty. It prevailed in the time of the Saviour, and it demanded all his authority to settle the opposite principle. See Luke xiii. 1—5. It is that into which men naturally and easily fall; and it required much observation, and long experience, and enlarged views of the divine administration, to draw the true lines on this subject. To a certain extent, and in certain instances, calamity certainly does prove that there is peculiar guilt. Such was the case with the old world that was destroyed by the deluge; such was the case with the cities of the plain; such is the case in the calamities that come upon the drunkard, and such, too, in the special curse produced by indulgence in licentiousness. But this principle does not run through *all* the calamities which fall on men. A tower may fall on the righteous as well as the wicked; an earthquake may destroy the innocent as well as the guilty; the pestilence sweeps away the holy and the unholy, the profane and the pure, the man who fears God and him who fears him not; and the inference is now seen to be too broad

that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.

when we infer, as the friends of Job did, that *no* righteous man is cut off by special calamity, or that great trials demonstrate that such sufferers are less righteous than others are. Judgments are *not* equally administered in this world, and hence the necessity for a future world of retribution. See Notes on Luke xiii. 2, 3.

8. *Even as I have seen.* Eliphaz appeals to his own observation, that men who had led wicked lives were suddenly cut off. Instances of this kind he might doubtless have observed—as all may have done. But his inference was too broad when he concluded that *all* the wicked are punished in this manner. It is true that wicked men *are* thus cut off and perish; but it is not true that *all* the wicked are thus punished in this life, nor that any of the righteous are not visited with similar calamities. His reasoning was of a kind that is common in the world—that of drawing universal conclusions from premises that are too narrow to sustain them, or from too few carefully observed facts. ¶ *They that plow iniquity.* This is evidently a proverbial expression; and the sense is, that as men sow they reap. If they sow wheat, they reap wheat; if barley, they reap barley; if tares, they reap tares. Thus in Prov. xxii. 8,

He that soweth iniquity shall reap also vanity.  
So in Hosea viii. 7:

For they have sown the wind,  
And they shall reap the whirlwind:  
It hath no stalk; the bud shall yield no meal;  
If so be it yield, strangers shall swallow it up.

Thus in the Persian adage:

"He that planteth thorns shall not gather roses." [Dr. Good.]

So Æschylus:

"*Ἀτης ἀρουρα Σάνατον ἐκκαρπίζεται.*

"The field of wrong brings forth death as its fruit."

The meaning of Eliphaz is, that men who form plans of wickedness must reap appropriate fruits. They cannot expect that an evil life will produce ultimate happiness.

9 By the blast of God they perish, and by <sup>1</sup> the breath of his nostrils are they consumed.

1 i. e., his anger. c 15. 30. Is. 11. 4.

9. *By the blast of God.* That is, by the judgment of God. The figure is taken from the hot and fiery wind, which, sweeping over a field of grain, dries it up and destroys it. In like manner, Eliphaz says the wicked perish before God. ¶ *And by the breath of his nostrils.* By his anger. The Scripture often speaks of *breathing out* indignation and wrath. Acts ix. i.; Ps. xxvii. 12; 2 Sam. xxii. 16; Ps. xviii. 15; xxxiii. 6. Notes on Isa. xi. 4; xxx. 28; xxxiii. 2. The figure was probably taken from the violent breathing which is evinced when the mind is under any strong emotion, especially anger. It refers here to any judgment by which God cuts off the wicked, but especially to sudden calamity—like a tempest or the pestilence.

10. *The roaring of the lion.* This is evidently a continuation of the argument in the preceding verses, and Eliphaz is stating what had occurred under his own observation. The expressions have much of a proverbial cast, and are designed to convey, in strong poetic language, what he supposed usually occurred. There can be no reasonable doubt here that he refers to *men* in these verses, for (1.) It is not true that the *lion* is destroyed in this manner. No more frequent calamity comes upon him than upon other animals, and perhaps he is *less* frequently overcome than others. 2. Such a supposition only would make the remarks of Eliphaz pertinent to his argument. He is speaking of the divine government in regard to *wicked men*, and he uses this language to convey the idea that they are often destroyed. (3.) It is common in the Scriptures, as in all Oriental writings, and, indeed, in Greek and Roman poetry, to compare unjust, cruel, and rapacious men with wild animals. See Notes on Isa. xi.; Comp. Ps. x. 9; lviii. 6. Eliphaz, therefore, here, by the use of the words rendered *lion*,

10 The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, and the teeth <sup>c</sup> of the young lions, are broken.

c Ps. 58. 6.

means to say that men of savage temper, and cruel dispositions, and untamed ferocity, were cut off by the judgments of God. It is remarkable that he employs so many words to designate the *lion* in these two verses. No less than *five* are employed, all of them probably denoting originally some peculiar and striking characteristics of the lion. It is also an illustration of the copiousness of the Hebrew language in this respect, and is a specimen of the custom of speaking in Arabia. The Arabic language is so copious that the Arabs boast that they have four hundred terms by which to designate the *lion*. A large part of them are, indeed, figurative expressions, derived from some quality of the animal, but they show a much greater copiousness in the language than can be found in Western dialects. The words used here by Eliphaz are about all the terms by which the lion is designated in the Scriptures. They are אֶרֶב, *arab*, גִּבּוֹר, *gibbor*, and גִּבּוֹרִים, *gibborim*. The word גִּבּוֹר, *gibbor*, *elation*, *pride*, is given to the lion, Job, xxviii. 8; xli. 26, from his proud gait; and perhaps the word אֶרֶב, *arab*, 2 Sam. xxviii. 20; 1 Chron. xi. 22. But Eliphaz has exhausted the usual epithets of the lion in the Hebrew language. It may be of some interest to inquire, in a few words, into the meaning of those which he has used. ¶ *The roaring of the lion.* The word here used, (אֶרֶב,) or in a more usual form אָרַב, is from אָרַב *arâb*, to *pull*, to *pluck*, and is probably given to the lion as the *puller in pieces*, on account of the mode in which he devours his prey. Bochart, however, contends that the name is not from אָרַב, because, says he, the lion does not bite or crop his food like grass, which, he says, the word properly means, but is from the verb רָאָה *rââh*, to *see*, because, says he, the lion is the

11 The old lion perisheth for lack of prey, and the stout lion's whelps are scattered abroad.

12 Now a thing was <sup>1</sup> secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof.

<sup>1</sup> by stealth.

most keen-sighted of the animals; or rather from the fire of his eyes—the terror which the glance of his eye inspires. So the Greeks derive the word *lion*, λέοντα, from λάω, to see. See Bochart, Hieroz. lib. iii. c. 1. p. 715. ¶ *The voice of the fierce lion.* The word here translated *fierce lion* (לִיָּוִן) is from לָוִן, shákhāl, to roar, and hence given for an obvious reason to a lion. Bochart understands by it the swarthy lion of Syria; the lion which the Arabians call *ad'lamon*. This lion, says he, is dark and dingy. The usual color of the lion is yellow, but Oppian says that the lion in Æthiopia is sometimes found of a dark color, μελανόχρους. See Bochart, Hieroz. lib. i. c. 1, pp. 717, 718. ¶ *The teeth of the young lions.* The word here used, נַעַר, means a “young lion already weaned, and beginning to hunt for prey.”—Gesenius. It thus differs from the נֹר, *gur*, which means a *whelp*, still under the care of the dam. See Ezek. xix. 2, 3. Comp. Bochart, Hieroz. lib. iii. c. 1, p. 714. Some expression is here evidently to be understood that shall be applicable to the voice, or the roaring of the lion. Noyes supplies the words, “are silenced.” The words “are broken” can be applicable only to the *teeth* of the young lions. It is unnatural to say that the “roaring” and the “voice” are *broken*. The sense is, that the lion roars in vain, and that calamity and destruction come notwithstanding his growl; and as applied to men, it means that men who resemble the lion are disappointed and punished.

11. *The old lion.* The word here used, זָקֵן, denotes a lion, “so called,” says Gesenius, “from his strength and bravery,” or, according to Umbreit, the lion in the strength of his old age. See an examination of the word in Bochart, Hieroz. p. i. lib. iii. c. 1, p. 720. ¶ *Perisheth for lack of prey.* Notwithstanding his strength and power. That

is, such a thing sometimes occurs. Eliphaz could not maintain that it always happened. The meaning seems to be, that as the strength of the lion was no security that he would not perish for want, so it was with men who resembled the lion in the strength of mature age. ¶ *And the stout lion's whelps.* The word here rendered “stout lion,” נָאֵר, is probably derived from the obsolete root נָאָה, *lábá*, to roar, and is given to the lion on account of his roaring. Bochart, Hieroz. p. i. lib. iii. c. 1, p. 719, supposes that the word means a *lioness*. These words complete the description of the lion, and the sense is, that the lion in no condition, or whatever name indicative of strength might be given to it, had power to resist God when he came forth for its destruction. Its roaring, its strength, its teeth, its rage, were all in vain. ¶ *Are scattered abroad.* That is, when the old lion is destroyed, the young ones flee, and are unable to offer resistance. So it is with men. When the divine judgments come upon them, they have no power to make successful resistance. God has them under control, and he comes forth at his pleasure to restrain and subdue them, as he does the wild beasts of the desert, though so fearful and formidable.

12. *Now a thing.* To confirm his views, Eliphaz appeals to a vision of a most remarkable character which he says he had had on some former occasion on the very point under consideration. The object of the vision was, to show that mortal man could not be more just than God, and that such was the purity of the Most High, that he put no confidence comparatively even in the angels. The design for which this is introduced here is, evidently, to reprove what he deemed the unfounded self-confidence of Job. He supposed that he had been placing an undue reliance on his own integrity; that he had not a just view of the infinite holiness of God, and

## 13 In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep

had not been aware of the true state of his own heart. The highest earthly excellency, is the meaning of Eliphaz, fades away before God, and furnishes no ground for self-reliance. It is so imperfect, so feeble, so far from what it should be, that it is no wonder that a God so holy and exalted should disregard it. He designed, also, by describing this vision, to reprove Job for seeming to be more wise than his Maker in arraigning him for his dealings, and uttering the language of complaint. The word "thing" here means a word (Heb.), a communication, a revelation. ¶ *Was secretly brought to me.* Marg. *by stealth.* The Hebrew word (שָׁמַר) means *to steal*; to take away by stealth, or secretly. Here it means, that the oracle was brought to him as it were by stealth. It did not come openly and plainly, but in secrecy and silence—as a thief approaches a dwelling. An expression similar to this occurs in Lucian, in *Amor*. p. 884, as quoted by Schultens, *κλεπτομένη λαλία καὶ ψιθυρισμός*. ¶ *And mine ear received a little thereof.* Dr. Good translates this, "and mine ear received a whisper along with it." Noyes, "And mine ear caught a whisper thereof." The Vulgate, "And my ear received secretly the pulsations of its whisper," *venas susurri ejus*. The word rendered "a little," קָטַן, occurs only here and in ch. xxvi. 14, where it is also rendered *little*. It means, according to Gesenius, a transient sound rapidly uttered and swiftly passing away. Symm. *ψιθυρισμός*—a whisper. According to Castell, it means a sound confused and feeble, such as one receives when a man is speaking in a hurried manner, and when he cannot catch all that is said. This is probably the sense here. Eliphaz means to say that he did not get all that might have been said in the vision. It occurred in such circumstances, and what was said was delivered in such a manner, that he did not hear it all distinctly. But he heard an important sentiment, which he proceeds to apply to the case of Job.—It has been made a

question whether Eliphaz really had such a vision, or whether he only supposed such a case, and whether the whole representation is not poetic. The fair construction is, that he had had such a vision. In such a supposition there is nothing inconsistent with the mode in which the will of God was made known in ancient times; and in the sentiments uttered there is nothing inconsistent with what might have been spoken by a celestial visitant on such an occasion. All that was spoken was in accordance with the truth everywhere revealed in the Scriptures, though Eliphaz perverted it to prove that Job was insincere and hypocritical. The general sentiment in the oracle was, that man was not pure and holy compared with his Maker; that no one was free from guilt in his sight; that there was no virtue in man in which God could put entire confidence; and that, therefore all were subjected to trials, and to death. But this general sentiment he proceeds to apply to Job, and regards it as teaching, that since he was overwhelmed with such peculiar afflictions, there must have been some *secret sin* of which he was guilty, which was the cause of his calamities.

13. *In thoughts.* Amidst the tumultuous and anxious thoughts which occur in the night. The Hebrew word rendered *thoughts*, (חֲשֹׁבוֹת,) means thoughts which *divide* and *distract* the mind. ¶ *From the visions of the night.* On the meaning of the word *visions*, see Notes on Isa. i. 1. This was a common mode in which the will of God was made known in ancient times. For an extended description of this method of communicating the will of God, the reader may consult my Introduction to Isaiah, § 7. ¶ *When deep sleep falleth on men.* The word here rendered *deep sleep*, חֲרָפָה, commonly denotes a profound repose or slumber brought upon man by divine agency. So Schultens *in loc.* It is the word used to describe the "deep sleep" which God brought upon Adam when he took from his side a rib to form Eve, Gen. ii. 21; and



sleep falleth on men,

14 Fear<sup>1</sup> came upon me, and

<sup>1</sup> met me.

that, also, which came upon Abraham, when a horror of great darkness fell upon him. Gen. xv. 12. It means here profound repose, and the vision which he saw was at that solemn hour when the world is usually locked in slumber. Umbreit renders this, "In the time of thoughts, before the night-visions," and supposes that Eliphaz refers to the time that was especially favorable to meditation and to serious contemplation *before* the time of sleep and of dreams. In support of this use of the preposition *וְ*, *min*, he appeals to Hagg. ii. 16, and Noldius Concord. Part. p. 546. Our common version, however, has probably preserved the true sense of the passage. It is impossible to conceive anything more sublime than this whole description. It was midnight. There was solitude and silence all around. At that fearful hour this vision came, and a sentiment was communicated to Eliphaz of the utmost importance, and fitted to make the deepest possible impression. The time; the quiet; the form of the image; its passing along, and then suddenly standing still; the silence, and then the deep and solemn voice—all were fitted to produce the profoundest awe. So graphic and so powerful is this description, that it would be impossible to read it—and particularly at midnight and alone—without something of the feeling of awe and horror which Eliphaz says it produced on his mind. It is a description which for power has probably never been equalled, though an attempt to describe an apparition from the invisible world has been often made. Virgil has attempted such a description, which, though exceedingly beautiful, is far inferior to this of the Sage of Teman. It is the description of the appearance of the wife of Æneas:

"Infelix simulacrum atque ipsius umbræ  
Creûsæ

Visa mihi ante oculos, et notâ major imago.  
Obstupui, steteruntque comæ, et vox faucibus  
hæsit." Æn. ii. 772.

"At length she hears,

And sudden through the shades of night ap-  
pears;

trembling, which made <sup>2</sup> all my  
bones to shake.

<sup>2</sup> the multitude of.

Appears no more Cretisa, nor my wife,  
But a pale spectre, larger than the life.  
Aghast, astonished, and struck dumb with  
fear,

I stood: like bristles rose my stiffened hair."

DRYDEN.

In the poems of Ossian there are several descriptions of apparitions or ghosts, probably more sublime than are to be found in any other uninspired writings. One of the most magnificent of these is that of the Spirit of Loda, which I will copy, in order that it may be compared with the one before us. "The wan cold moon rose in the east. Sleep descended on the youths. Their blue helmets glitter to the beam; the fading fire decays. But sleep did not rest on the king. He rose in the midst of his arms, and slowly ascended the hill, to behold the flame of Sarno's tower. The flame was dim and distant: the moon hid her red flame in the east. A blast came from the mountains; on its wings was the SPIRIT OF LODA. He came to his place in his terrors, and shook his dusky spear. His eyes appear like flames in his dark face; his voice is like distant thunder. Fingal advanced his spear amid the night, and raised his voice on high. 'Son of Night retire: call thy winds, and fly! Why dost thou come to my presence with thy shadowy arms? Do I fear thy gloomy form, spirit of dismal Loda? Weak is thy shield of clouds; feeble is that meteor, thy sword! The blast rolls them together; and thou thyself art lost. Fly from my presence, Son of Night! Call thy winds and fly!' 'Dost thou force me from my place?' replied the hollow voice. 'The people bend before me. I turn the battle in the field of the brave. I look on the nations, and they vanish; my nostrils pour the blast of death. I come abroad on the winds; the tempests are before my face, but my dwelling is calm above the clouds; the fields of my rest are pleasant.'" Comp. also, the description of the Ghost in Hamlet.

14. Fear came upon me. Marg. Met me. The Chaldee Paraphrase renders

15 Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up:

16 It stood still, but I could

this, "a tempest," *ἄρη*. The LXX, *Φρίκη* — *shuddering*, or *horror*. The sense is, that he became greatly alarmed at the vision. ¶ *Which made all my bones to shake*. Marg. As in Hebrew, *the multitude of my bones*. A similar image is employed by Virgil,

"Obstupere animis, gelidusque per ima cucurrit  
Ossa tremor." *Æn.* ii. 120.

"A cold tremor ran through all their bones."

15. *Then a spirit passed before my face*. He does not intimate whether it was the spirit of a man, or an angel, who thus appeared. The belief in such apparitions was common in the early ages, and indeed has prevailed at all times. No one can demonstrate that God *could* not communicate his will in such a manner as this, or by a messenger deputed from his immediate presence to impart valuable truth to men. ¶ *The hair of my flesh stood up*. This is an effect which is known often to be produced by fear. Sometimes the hair is made to turn white almost in an instant, as an effect of sudden alarm; but usually the effect is to make it stand on end. Seneca uses language remarkably similar to this in describing the effect of fear, in *Hercule Cæto*:

"Vagus per artus errat excussos tremor.  
Erectus horret crinis, impulsis ad hoc  
Stat terror animis, et cor attonitum salit,  
Pavidumque trepidis palpitat venis jecur."

So Virgil,

"Steteruntque comæ, et vox faucibus hæsit."  
*Æn.* ii. 774.

See also *Æn.* iii. 48, iv. 289. So also *Æn.* xii. 868:

"Arrectæque horrore comæ."

A similar description of the effect of fear is given in the Ghost's speech to Hamlet:

"But that I am forbid  
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,  
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word  
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young  
blood,  
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their  
spheres,

not discern the form thereof: an image *was* before mine eyes;  
<sup>1</sup> *there was* silence, and I heard a voice, *saying*,

<sup>1</sup> or, *I heard a still voice*.

Thy knotty and combined locks to part,  
And each particular hair to stand on end,  
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine."

The fact here referred to—that fear or fright causes the hair to stand on end—is too well established, and too common to admit a doubt. The *cause* may be, that sudden fear has the effect to drive the blood to the heart, as the seat of vitality, and the extremities are left cold, and the skin thus contracts, and the effect is to raise the hair.

16. *It stood still*. It took a fixed position and looked on me. It at first glided by, or towards him, then stood in an immovable position, as if to attract his attention, and to prepare him for the solemn announcement which it was about to make. This was the point in which most horror would be felt. We should be less alarmed at anything which a strange messenger should *say*, than to have him stand and fix his eyes steadily and silently upon us. Hence Horatio, in "Hamlet," tortured by the imperturbable silence of the Ghost, earnestly entreated it to give him relief by speaking.

"Hor. What art thou that usurp'st this time  
of night,  
Together with that fair and warlike form  
In which the majesty of buried Denmark  
Did sometime march? By heaven, I charge  
thee, speak.

*Mar.* It is offended.

*Ber.* See! It stalks away.

*Hor.* Stay; speak: speak, I charge thee  
speak." Act i. Sc. i.

"Re-enter Ghost.

*Hor.* But, soft; behold! lo, where it comes  
again!

I'll cross it, though it blast me.—Stay, illusion;  
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,  
Speak to me:

If there be any good thing to be done,  
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,  
Speak to me:

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,  
Which, happily foreknowing, may avoid,  
O speak!

Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life  
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,  
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in  
death,

Speak of it; stay, and speak." Act i. Sc. i.

## 17 Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man be

## "Enter Ghost.

*Hor.* Look, my lord, it comes!

*Ham.* Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,  
Bringing with thee airs from heaven, or blasts  
from hell,

Be thy intents wicked or charitable,  
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,  
That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee  
Hamlet,

King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me;  
Let me not burst in ignorance." Act i. Sc. iv.

¶ *But I could not discern the form thereof.* This might have arisen from fear, or from the darkness of the night, or because the spirit was not distinct enough in its outline to enable him to do it. There is here just the kind of *obscurity* which is essential to the sublime, and the statement of the circumstance is a master-stroke in the poet. A less perfect imagination would have attempted to describe the form of the spectre, and would have given account of its shape, and eyes, and color. But none of these are here hinted at. The subject is left so that the imagination is most deeply impressed, and the whole scene has the aspect of the highest sublimity. Noyes very improperly renders this, "Its face I could not discern." But the word used, *רָאָה*, does not mean *face* here merely; it means the form, figure, aspect, of the spectre. ¶ *An image was before mine eyes.* Some form; some appearance was before me, whose exact figure I could not mark or describe. ¶ *There was silence.* Marg. *I heard a still voice.* So Rosenmüller says that the word here, *רָאָה*, does not mean silence, but a gentle breeze, or air—*aurum lenem*—such as Elijah heard after the tempest had gone by, and when God spoke to him, 1 Kings xix. 12, 13. Grotius supposes that it means here, the *רָאָה Bath-Kol*, or "daughter of the voice," of which the Jewish Rabbins speak so often—the still and gentle voice in which God spoke to men. The word used (*רָאָה*) usually means silence, stillness, as of the winds after a storm, *a calm*, Ps. cvii. 29. The LXX render it,

"I heard a gentle breeze, *αὔραν*, and a voice," *καὶ φωνήν*. But it seems to me that the common reading is preferable. There was stillness—a solemn, awful silence, and then he heard a voice impressively speaking. The stillness was designed to fix the attention, and to prepare the mind for the sublime announcement which was to be made.

17. *Shall mortal man.* Or, shall feeble man. The idea of *mortal* is not necessarily implied in the word here used, *אָנָּה*. It means *man*; and is usually applied to the lower classes or ranks of men. Notes on Isa. viii. 1. The common opinion in regard to this word is, that it is derived from *אָנָּה*, to be sick, or ill at ease; and then desperate, or incurable—as of a disease or wound. Jer. xv. 18. Mic. i. 9. Job xxxiv. 6. Gesenius (Lex.) calls this derivation in question; but if it be the correct idea, then the word here used originally referred to man as feeble, and as liable to sickness and calamity. I see no reason to doubt that the common idea is correct, and that it refers to man as weak and feeble. The other word here used to denote man (*אָדָם*) is given to him on account of his *strength*. The two words, therefore, embrace man, whether considered as feeble or strong—and the idea is, that none of the race could be more pure than God. ¶ *Be more just than God?* Some expositors have supposed that the sense of this expression in the Hebrew is, "Can man be pure before God, or in the sight of God?" They allege that it could not have been made a question whether man could be *more* pure than God, or more just than his Maker. Such is the view presented of the passage by Rosenmüller, Good, Noyes, and Umbreit:

"Shall mortal man be just before God?  
Shall man be pure before his Maker?"

In support of this view, and this use of the Hebrew preposition *בְּ*, Rosenmüller appeals to Jer. li. 5. Num. xxxii. 22. Ezek. xxxiv. 18. This, however, is not wholly satisfactory. The more literal translation is that which occurs in

more pure than his Maker?

18 Behold, he put no trust in his servants; <sup>1</sup> and his angels <sup>d</sup> he charged with folly.

<sup>1</sup> or, *nor in his angels, in whom he put light.*  
<sup>d</sup> 2 Pe. 2. 4.

the common version, and this accords with the Vulgate and the Chaldee. If so understood, it is designed to repress and reprove the pride of men, which arraigns the equity of the divine government, and which *seems* to be wiser and better than God. Thus understood, it would be a pertinent reproof of Job, who in his complaint (ch. iii.) had *seemed* to be wiser than God. He had impliedly charged him with injustice and want of goodness. All men who murmur against God, and who arraign the equity and goodness of the divine dispensations, claim to be wiser and better than he is. They would have ordered things more wisely, and in a better manner. They would have kept the world from the disorders and sins which actually exist, and would have made it pure and happy. How pertinent, therefore, was it to ask whether man could be more pure or just than his Maker! And how pertinent was the solemn question propounded in the hearing of Eliphaz by the celestial messenger—a question that seems to have been originally proposed in view of the complaints and murmurs of a self-confident race!

18. *Behold, he put no trust in his servants.* These are evidently the words of the oracle that appeared to Eliphaz. See Schultens, *in loc.* The word *servants* here refers to angels; and the idea is, that God was so pure that he did not confide even in the exalted holiness of angels—meaning that *their* holiness was infinitely inferior to his. The design is to state that God had the highest possible holiness, such as to render the holiness of all others, no matter how exalted, as nothing—as all lesser lights are as nothing before the glory of the sun. The Chaldee renders this, “Lo, in his servants, the prophets, he does not confide;” but the more correct reference is undoubtedly to the angels. ¶ *And his angels he charged with folly.* Marg. Or,

19 How much less *in* them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, *which* are crushed before the moth?

*Nor in his angels in whom he put light.* The different rendering in the text and in the margin has arisen from the supposed ambiguity of the word employed here—חַלְלָה. It is a word which occurs nowhere else, and hence it is difficult to determine its true signification. Walton renders it, *gloriation, glorying*; Jerome, *pravitas, wickedness*; the LXX, *σκολεδν, fault, blemish*; Dr. Good, *default, or defection*; Noyes, *frailty*. Gesenius says that the word is derived from חָלַל, *hālā*! (No. 4), to be foolish. So also Kimchi explains it. According to this, the idea is that of foolishness—i. e., they are far inferior to God in wisdom; or, as the word folly in the Scriptures is often synonymous with sin, it might mean that their purity was so far inferior to his as to appear like impurity and sin. The essential idea is, that even the holiness of angels was not to be compared with God. It is not that they were polluted and unholy, for, in their measure, they are perfect; but it is that their holiness was as nothing compared with the infinite perfection of God. It is to be remembered that a part of the angels had sinned, and *they* had shown that their integrity was not to be confided in; and whatever might be the holiness of a creature, it was possible to conceive that he might sin. But no such idea could for a moment enter the mind in regard to God. The object of this whole argument is to show, that if confidence could not be reposed in the angels, and if all their holiness was as nothing before God, little confidence could be placed in man; and that it was presumption for him to sit in judgment on the equity of the divine dealings.

19. *How much less* (רַחֵם). This particle has the general sense of *addition, accession*, especially of something more important; *yea more, besides, even*. Gesenius. The meaning here is, “how

much more true is this of man!" He puts no confidence in his angels, he charges them with frailty; how much more strikingly true must this be of man! It is not merely, as our common translation would seem to imply, that he put much less confidence in man than in angels: it is, that all he had said must be more strikingly true of man, who dwelt in so frail and humble a habitation. ¶ In *them that dwell in houses of clay*. In man. The phrase "houses of clay" refers to the body made of dust. The sense is, that man, from the fact that he dwells in such a tabernacle, is far inferior to the pure spirits that surround the throne of God, and much more liable to sin. The body is represented as a temporary tent, tabernacle, or dwelling for the soul. That dwelling is soon to be taken down, and its tenant, the soul, to be removed to other abodes. So Paul (2 Cor. v. 1) speaks of the body as *ἡ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία τοῦ σκηνους*—"our earthly house of this tabernacle." So Plato speaks of it as *γῆτινον σκῆνος*—*an earthly tent*; and so Aristophanes (Av. 587), among other contemptuous expressions applied to men, calls them *πλάσματα πηλοῦ*—"vessels of clay." The idea in the verse before us is beautiful, and as affecting as it is beautiful. A house of *clay* (רֶחֱלִי) was little fitted to bear the extremes of heat and cold, of storm and sunshine, of rain, and frost, and snow, and would soon crumble and decay. It must be a frail and temporary dwelling. It could not endure the changes of the seasons and the lapse of years like a dwelling of granite or marble. So with our bodies. They can bear little. They are frail, infirm, and feeble. They are easily prostrated, and soon fall back to their native dust. How can they who dwell in *such* edifices, be in any way compared with the Infinite and Eternal God? ¶ *Whose foundation is in the dust*. A house, to be firm and secure, should be founded on a rock. See Matt. vii. 25. The figure is kept up here of comparing man with a house; and as a house that is built on the sand or the dust may be easily washed away (Comp. Matt. vii. 26, 27), and could not

be confided in, so it was with man. He was like such a dwelling; and no more confidence could be reposed in him than in such a house. ¶ *Which are crushed*. They are broken in pieces, trampled on, destroyed (אָרָץ), by the most insignificant objects. ¶ *Before the moth?* See Notes on Isa. l. 9, li. 8. The word moth

Gr. *σῆς*, Vulg. *tinea*, denotes properly an insect which flies by night, and particularly that which attaches itself to woollen cloth and consumes it. It is possible, however, that the word here denotes the *moth-worm*. This "moth-worm is one state of the creature, which first is inclosed in an egg, and thence issues in the form of a worm; after a time, it quits the form of a worm, to assume that of the complete state of the insect or the moth." Calmet. The comparison here, therefore, is not that of a moth flying against a house to upset it, nor of the moth consuming man as it does a garment, but it is that of a feeble worm that preys upon man and destroys him; and the idea is, that the most feeble of all objects may crush him. The following remarks from Niebuhr (Reisebeschreibung von Arabien, S. 133), will serve to illustrate this passage, and show that so feeble a thing as a worm may destroy human life. "There is in Yemen, in India, on the coast of the South Sea, a common sickness caused by the Guinea, or nerve-worm, known to European physicians by the name of *vena Medinensis*. It is supposed in Yemen that this worm is drunk in from the bad water which the inhabitants of those countries are under a necessity of using. Many of the Arabians on this account take the precaution to strain the water which they drink. If any one has by accident swallowed an egg of this worm, no trace of it is to be seen until it appears on the skin; and the first indication of it there is the irritation which is caused. On our physician, a few days before his death, five of these worms made their appearance, although we had been more than five months absent from Arabia. On the island of Charedsch, I saw a French officer, whose name was Le Page, who, after a long and arduous journey, which he had made on foot,

20 They are <sup>1</sup> destroyed from morning to evening: they perish for ever without any regarding it.

<sup>1</sup> *beaten in pieces.*

from Pondicherry to Surat, through the heart of India, found the traces of such a worm in him, which he endeavoured to extract from his body. He believed that he had swallowed it when drinking the waters of Mahratta. The worm is not dangerous, if it can be drawn from the body without being broken. The Orientals are accustomed, as soon as the worm makes its appearance through the skin, to wind it up on a piece of straw, or of dry wood. It is finer than a thread, and is from two to three feet in length. The winding up of the worm frequently occupies a week; and no further inconvenience is experienced, than the care which is requisite not to break it. If, however, it is broken, it draws itself back into the body, and then becomes dangerous. Lameness, gangrene, or the loss of life itself, is the result." See Notes on Isaiah referred to above. The comparison of man with a worm, or an insect, on account of his feebleness and shortness of life, is common in the sacred writings, and in the classics. The following passage from Pindar, quoted by Schultens, hints at the same idea

Ἐπάμεροι, τί δὲ τις; τί δ' οὐ τις;  
Σκιάς ὄναρ ἀνθρώπων.

"Things of a day! What is any one? What is he not? Men are the dream of a shadow!"—The idea in the passage before us is, that men are exceedingly frail, and that in such creatures no confidence can be placed. How should such a creature, therefore, presume to arraign the wisdom and equity of the divine dealings? How can he be more just or wise than God?

20. *They are destroyed from morning to evening. Marg. beaten in pieces.* This is nearer to the Hebrew. The phrase "from morning to evening" means, between the morning and the evening; that is, they live scarcely a single day. See Notes on Isaiah, xxxviii. 12. The idea is, not the continuance of

21 Doth <sup>c</sup> not their excellency *which* is in them go away? they die, <sup>f</sup> even without wisdom.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. 146. 3, 4.

<sup>f</sup> Is. 2. 22.

the work of destruction from morning to evening; but that man's life is exceedingly short, so short that he scarce seems to live from morning to night. What a beautiful expression, and how true! How little qualified is such a being to sit in judgment on the doings of the Most High! ¶ *They perish for ever.* Without being restored to life. They pass away, and nothing is ever seen of them again! ¶ *Without any regarding it.* Without its being noticed. How strikingly true is this! What a narrow circle is affected by the death of a man, and how soon does even that circle cease to be affected! A few relatives and friends feel it and weep over the loss; but the mass of men are unconcerned. It is like taking a grain of sand from the sea-shore, or a drop of water from the ocean. There is indeed *one less*, but the place is soon supplied, and the ocean rolls on its tumultuous billows as though none had been taken away. So with human life. The affairs of men will roll on; the world will be as busy, and active, and thoughtless, as though we had not been; and soon—O how painfully soon to human pride—will our names be forgotten! The circle of friends will cease to weep, and then cease to remember us. The last memorial that we lived will be gone. The house that we built, the bed on which we slept, the counting-room that we occupied, the monuments that we raised, the books that we made, the stone that we directed to be placed over our graves, will all be gone; and the last memento that we ever lived, will have faded away! How vain is man! How vain is pride! How foolish is ambition! How important the announcement that there is another world, where we may live on for ever!

21. *Doth not their excellency, &c.* Dr. Good renders this, "Their fluttering round is over with them," by a very forced construction of the passage. Translators

and expositors have been very much divided in opinion as to its meaning; but the sense seems to be, that whatever is excellent in men is torn away <sup>וְ</sup> removed. Their excellence does not keep them from death, and they are taken off before they are truly wise. The word "excellency" here, refers not only to moral excellency or virtue, but everything in which they excel others. Whatever there is in them of strength, or virtue, or influence, is removed. The word here used (<sup>יָרָה</sup>) means, literally, something hanging over or redundant (from <sup>יָרָה</sup>, to hang over, be redundant, or to remain), and hence it means abundance or remainder, and then that which exceeds or abounds. It is thus applied to any distinguished virtue or excellency, as that which *exceeds* the ordinary limits or bounds. Men perish; and however eminent they may have been, they are soon cut off, and vanish away. The object here is to show how weak, and frail, and unworthy of confidence are men, even in their most elevated condition. ¶ *They die even without wisdom.* That is, before they become truly wise. The object is to show, that men are so short-lived compared with angels, that they have no opportunity to become distinguished for wisdom. Their days are few; and however careful may be their observation, before they have had time to become truly wise, they are hurried away. They are therefore wholly disqualified to sit in judgment on the doings of God, and to arraign, as Job had done, the divine wisdom.

Here closes the oracle which was addressed to Eliphaz. It is a description

of unrivalled sublimity. In the sentiments that were addressed to Eliphaz, there is nothing that is contradictory to the other communications which God has made to men, or to what is taught by reason. Every reader of this passage must feel that the thoughts are singularly sublime, and that they are such as are adapted to make a deep impression on the mind. The error in Eliphaz consisted in the *application* which he makes of them to Job, and in the inference which he draws, that he must have been a hypocrite. This inference is drawn in the following chapter. As the oracle stands here, it is pertinent to the argument which Eliphaz had commenced, and just fitted to furnish a reproof of Job for the irreverent manner in which he had spoken, and the complaints which he had brought (ch. iii.) against the dealings of God. Let us learn from the oracle: (1.) That man cannot be more just than God; and let this be an abiding principle of our lives; (2.) Not to murmur at his dispensations, but to confide in his superior wisdom and goodness; (3.) That our opportunities of observation, and our rank in existence, are as nothing compared with those of the angels, who are yet so inferior to God as to be charged with folly; (4.) That our foundation is in the dust, and that the most insignificant object may sweep us away; and (5.) That in these circumstances humility becomes us. Our proper situation is in the dust; and whatever calamities may befall us, we should confide in God, and feel that he is qualified to direct our affairs, and the affairs of the universe.

## CHAPTER V.

**C**ALL now, if there be any that will answer thee; and

to which of the saints wilt thou<sup>1</sup> turn?

<sup>1</sup> or, look.

1. *Call now.* The expressions here used, as Noyes has well observed, seem to be derived from the law, where the

word *call* denotes the language of the complainant, and *answer*, that of the defendant. According to this, the mean-

## 2 For wrath killeth the foolish

ing of the words "call now" is, *in jus voca*: that is, call the Deity to account, or bring an action against him; or, more properly, enter into an argument or litigation, as before a tribunal. See Notes on Isa. xli. 1, where similar language occurs. ¶ *If there be any that will answer thee.* If there is any one who will respond to thee in such a trial. Noyes renders this, "See if He will answer thee;" that is, "See if the Deity will condescend to enter into a judicial controversy with thee, and give an account of his dealings towards thee." Dr. Good renders it, "Which of these can come forward to thee?" i. e., "Which of these weakly, ephemeral, perishing insects—which of these nothings, can render thee any assistance?" The meaning is probably, "Go to trial, if you can find *any* respondent; if there is any one willing to engage in such a debate; and let the matter be fairly adjudicated and determined. Let an argument be entered into before a competent tribunal, and the considerations *pro* and *con* be urged on the point now under consideration." The desire of Eliphaz was, that there should be a fair investigation, where all that could be said on one side or the other of the question would be urged, and where there would be a decision of the important point in dispute. He evidently felt that Job would be foiled in the argument before whomsoever it should be conducted, and whoever might take up the opposite side; and hence he says that he could get no one of "the saints" to assist him in the argument. In the expression, "If there be any that will answer thee," he may mean to intimate that he would find no one who would be willing even to go into an investigation of the subject. The case was so plain, the views of Job were so obviously wrong, the arguments for the opinion of Eliphaz were so obvious, that he doubted whether any one could be found who would be willing to make it the occasion of a set and formal trial, as if there could be any doubt about it. ¶ *And to which of the saints wilt*

one.

<sup>1</sup> or, indignation.

*thou turn?* Marg. as in Heb., *look*. That is, to which of them wilt thou look to be an advocate for such sentiments? or which of them would be willing to go into an argument on so plain a subject. Grotius supposes that Eliphaz, having boasted that he had produced a divine revelation in his favor (ch. iv.), now calls upon Job to produce, if he can, something of the same kind in his defence, or to see if there were any of the heavenly spirits who would give a similar revelation in *his* favor. The word here rendered "saints" (ἁγῶν), means, properly, those who are sanctified or holy; and it may be either applied to holy men, or to angels. It is generally supposed that it here refers to angels. So Schultens, Rosenmüller, Noyes, Good, and others, understand it. The word is often used in this sense in the Scriptures. So the LXX understand it here—*ἡ εἰσινα ἀγγέλων ἁγίων ὁψη*. Such is probably its meaning, and the sense of the passage is, "Call now upon any one, and you will find none willing to be the advocate of such sentiments as you have urged. No holy beings—men or angels—would defend them." By this, probably, Eliphaz designed to show Job that he differed from all holy beings, and that his views were not those of a truly pious man. If he could find no one, either among holy angels or pious men, to be the advocate of his opinions, it followed that he *must* be in error.

2. *For wrath killeth the foolish man.* That is, the wrath of God. The word *foolish* here is used as synonymous with *wicked*, because wickedness is supreme folly. The general proposition here is, that the wicked are cut off, and that they are overtaken with heavy calamities in this life. In proof of this, Eliphaz appeals in the following verses to his own observation. The implied inference is, that Job, having had all his possessions taken away, and having been overwhelmed with unspeakably great personal calamities, was to be regarded



## 3 I \* have seen the foolish

a Ps. 37. 35.

as having been a great sinner. Some suppose, however, that the word *wrath* here relates to the indignation or the repining of the individual himself, and that the reference is to the fact that such wrath or repining preys upon the spirit, and draws down the divine vengeance. This is the view of Schultens, and of Noyes. But it seems more probable that Eliphaz means to state the proposition, that the wrath of God burns against the wicked, and that the following verses are an illustration of this sentiment derived from his own observation. ¶ *And envy.* Marg. *indignation.* Jerome, *invidia, envy.* Sept. ζήλος. Castellio, *severitas ac vehementia.* The Hebrew word נָפֶחַ, means jealousy, envy, ardor, zeal. It may be applied to any strong affection of the mind; any fervent, glowing, and burning emotion. Gesenius supposes it means here *envy*, as excited by the prosperity of others. To me it seems that the connexion requires us to understand it of wrath, or indignation, as in Deut. xxix. 19; Ps. lxxix. 5. As applied to God, it often means his jealousy, or his anger, when the affections of men are placed on other objects than himself. Num. xxv. 11; Zeph. i. 18, *et al.* ¶ *Slayeth the silly one.* Good and Noyes render this, "the weak man." Jerome, *parvulum, the little one.* The LXX, *πεπλανημένον, the erring.* Walton, *ardelionem, the busy-body.* The Hebrew word נָפֶחַ, is from נָפַח, *Pâthâh, to open, to expand*; and hence the participle is applied to one who opens his lips, or whose mouth is open; that is, a garrulous person, Prov. xx. 19; and also to one who is *open-hearted*, frank, ingenuous, unsuspecting; and hence one who is easily influenced by others, or whose heart may be easily enticed. Thus it comes to mean one who is simple and foolish. In this sense it is used here, to denote one who is so simple and foolish as to be drawn aside by weak arguments and unfounded opinions. I have no doubt that Eliphaz meant, by insinuation, to apply this to Job, as being a weak-minded man, for

taking root: but suddenly I cursed his habitation.

having allowed the views which he entertained to make such an impression on his mind, and for having expressed himself as he had done. The proposition is general; but it would be easy to understand how he intended it to be applied.

3. *I have seen the foolish.* The wicked. To confirm the sentiment which he had just advanced, Eliphaz appeals to his own observation, and says that though the wicked for a time seem to be prosperous, yet he had observed that they were soon overtaken with calamity and cut down. He evidently means that prosperity was no evidence of the divine favor; but that when it had continued for a little time, and was then withdrawn, it was proof that the man who had been prospered was at heart a wicked man. It was easy to understand that he meant that this should be applied to Job, who, though he had been favored with temporary prosperity, was now revealed to be at heart a wicked man. The sentiment here advanced by Eliphaz, as the result of his observation, strikingly accords with the observation of David, as expressed in the XXXVIIth Psalm:

I have seen the wicked in great power,  
And spreading himself like a green bay-tree;  
Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not:  
Yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.  
Vs. 35, 36.

¶ *Taking root.* This figure, to denote prosperous and rapid growth, is often used in the Scriptures. Thus in Psalm i. 3:

And he shall be like a tree planted by the  
rivers of water,  
That bringeth forth his fruit in his season.

So Isa. xxvii. 6:

Those that come out of Jacob shall he cause to  
take root;  
Israel shall blossom and bud,  
And shall fill the face of the world with fruit.

So Ps. lxxx. 9, 10.

Thou preparedst room before it,  
And didst cause it to take deep root,  
And it filled the land.  
The hills were covered with the shadow of it,  
And the boughs thereof were like the goodly  
cedars.

¶ *But suddenly.* Meaning either that

4 His children are far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate, neither *is there* any to deliver *them*.

calamity came upon him *suddenly* — as it had upon Job, that is, without any apparent preparation, or that calamity came *before a great while*, that is, that this prosperity did not continue. Probably there is an implied reference here to the case of Job, meaning that he had known just such instances before; and as the case of Job accorded with what he had before seen, he hastened to the conclusion that Job must have been a wicked man. ¶ *I cursed his habitation*. I had occasion to regard it as accursed; that is, I witnessed the downfall of his fortunes, and pronounced his habitation accursed. I saw that God regarded it as such, and that he had suddenly punished him. This accords with the observation of David, referred to above.

4. *His children are far from safety*. That is, this is soon manifest by their being cut off or subjected to calamity. The object of Eliphaz is, to state the result of his own observation, and to show how calamity overtook the wicked though they even prospered for a time. He begins with that which a man would feel most—the calamity which comes upon his children, and says that God would punish him in them. Every word of this would go to the heart of Job; for he could not but feel that it was aimed at him, and that the design was to prove that the calamities that had come upon his children were a proof of his own wickedness and of the divine displeasure. It is remarkable that Job listens to this with the utmost patience. There is no interruption of the speaker; no breaking in upon the argument of his friend; no mark of uneasiness. Oriental politeness required that a speaker should be heard attentively through whatever he might say. See the Intro. § 7. (13.) Cutting and severe, therefore, as this strain of remark must have been, the sufferer sat meekly and heard it all, and waited for the appropriate time when an answer might be returned. ¶ *And*

5 Whose harvest the hungry eateth up, and taketh it even out of the thorns, and the robber swalloweth up their substance.

*they are crushed in the gate*. The gate of a city in ancient times was the chief place of concourse, and was the place where public business was usually transacted, and where courts of justice were held. See Gen. xxiii. 10; Deut. xxi. 19; xxv. 6, 7; Ruth, iv. 1, seq.; Ps. cxxvii. 5; Prov. xxii. 22. The Greeks also held their courts in some public place of business. Hence the *forum*, ἀγορά, was also a place for fairs. See Jahn's Archæology, § 247. Some suppose that the meaning here is, that they were oppressed and trodden down by the concourse in the gate. But the more probable meaning is, that they found no one to advocate their cause; that they were subject to oppression and injustice in judicial decisions; and that when their parent was dead, no one would stand up to vindicate them from respect to his memory. The idea is, that though there might be temporary prosperity, yet that it would not be long before heavy calamities would come upon the children of the wicked.

5. *Whose harvest the hungry eateth up*. That is, they are not permitted to enjoy the avails of their own labor. The harvest field is subject to the depredations of others, who contrive to possess themselves of it, and to consume it. ¶ *And taketh it even out of the thorns*. Or, he seizes it to the very thorns. That is, the famished robber seizes the whole of the harvest. He takes it all away, even to the thistles, and chaff, and cockle, and whatever impure substances there may be growing with the grain. He does not wait to separate the grain from the other substances, but consumes it all. He spares nothing. ¶ *And the robber swalloweth up their substance*. Noyes renders this, as Gesenius proposes to do, “and a snare gapeth after his substance;” Dr. Good, “and rigidly swoopeth up their substance.” Rosenmüller, much better: Cujusque facultates exhauriebant sitibundæ.

6 Although<sup>1</sup> affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground;

<sup>1</sup> or, *iniquity*.

copying exactly the version of Castelleo. The Vulgate in a similar manner, Et bibent sitientes divitias ejus—*And the thirsty drink up his wealth*. The LXX, ἐκσφαινοῦσθαι αὐτῶν ἡ ἰσχύς—*should their power be absorbed*. The true sense, as I conceive, is, “the thirsty gasp, or pant, after their wealth;” that is, they consume it. The word rendered in our common version, “the robber,” (זָכַר,) is, according to the ancient versions, the same as צָמָא, *the thirsty*, and this sense the parallelism certainly requires. So obvious is this, that it is better to suppose a slight error in the Hebrew text, than to give it the signification of a “snare,” as Noyes does, and as Gesenius (Lex.) proposes. The word rendered “swalloweth up” (אָכַל) means, properly, to breathe hard, to pant, to blow; and then to yawn after, to desire, to absorb; and the sense here is, that *the thirsty* consume their property. The whole figure is taken from robbers and freebooters; and I have no doubt that Eliphaz meant impliedly to allude to the case of Job, and to say that he had known just such cases, where, though there was great temporary prosperity, yet before long the children of the man who was prospered, and who professed to be pious, but was not, were crushed, and his property taken away by robbers. It was this similarity of the case of Job to the facts which he had observed, that staggered him so much in regard to his character.

6. *Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust*. Marg. or *iniquity*. The marginal reading here has been inserted from the different meanings attached to the Hebrew word. That word (אָכַל) properly means nothingness, or vanity; then nothingness as to worth, unorthiness, wickedness, iniquity; and then the consequences of iniquity—adversity, calamity, affliction. Ps. lv. 4; Prov. xxii. 8; Ps. xc. 10; Job, xv. 35. The

7 Yet<sup>b</sup> man is born unto<sup>2</sup> trouble, as the<sup>3</sup> sparks fly upward.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Co. 10. 13.

<sup>2</sup> or, *labour*.

<sup>3</sup> sons of the burning coal lift up to fly.

LXX render it κόπος, *labor*, or *trouble*. The Vulgate, *Nihil in terra, sine causa*—“there is nothing on the earth without a cause.” The general sense is plain. It is, that afflictions are not to be ascribed to chance, or that they are not without intelligent design. They do not come up like thistles, brambles, and thorns, from the unconscious earth. They have a cause. They are under the direction of God. The *object* of Eliphaz in the statement is, to show to Job that it was improper to murmur, and that he should commit his cause to a God of infinite power and wisdom. Ver. 8, seq. Afflictions. Eliphaz says, could not be avoided. Man was born unto them. He ought to expect them, and when they come, they should be submitted to as ordered by an intelligent, wise, and good Being. This is *one* true ground of consolation in afflictions. They do not come from the unconscious earth; they do not spring up of themselves. Though it is true that man is born to them, and must expect them, yet it is also true that they are ordered in infinite wisdom, and that they always have a design. ¶ *Neither doth trouble spring out of the ground*. The LXX render this, “Nor will affliction spring up from the mountains.”

7. *Yet man is born unto trouble*. All this is connected with the sentiment in ver. 8, seq. The meaning is, that “since afflictions are ordered by an intelligent Being, and since man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward, therefore it is wise to commit our cause to God, and not to murmur against him.” Marg. or *labor*. The word here (אָכַל) rather means *trouble*, or *affliction*, than *labor*. The sense is, that as certainly as man is born, so sure is it that he will have trouble. It follows from the condition of our being, as certainly as that unconscious objects will follow the laws of their nature—that sparks will ascend. This seems to have a proverbial cast,

8 I would seek unto God; and unto God would I commit my cause:

and was doubtless regarded as a sentiment universally true. It is as true now as it was then; for it is still the great law of our being, that trouble as certainly comes sooner or later, as that material objects obey the laws of nature which God has impressed on them. ¶ *As the sparks fly upward.* The Hebrew expression here is very beautiful—"as *בני רעש*—the sons of flame fly." The word used (*רעש*) means, flame, lightning; the sons, or children of the flame, are that which it produces; i. e., sparks. Gesenius strangely renders it, "sons of the lightning; i. e., birds of prey, which fly as swift as the lightning." So Dr. Good, "As the bird-tribes are made to fly upwards." So Umbreit renders it, Gleichwie die Brut des Raubgeflügels sich hoch in Flügel hebt—"as a flock of birds of prey elevate themselves on the wing." Noyes adopts the construction of Gesenius; partly on the principle that man would be more likely to be compared to birds, living creatures, than to sparks. There is considerable variety in the interpretation of the passage. The LXX render it, νεοσσὶ δὲ γυπὸς—the young of the vulture. The Chaldee, *בני מַיִן*—the sons of demons. Syriac, *Sons of birds.* Jerome, Man is born to labor, and the bird to flight—*et avis ad volatum.* Schultens renders it, "glittering javelins;" and Arius Montanus, "sons of the live coal." It seems to me that our common version has expressed the true meaning. But the idea is not essentially varied whichever interpretation is adopted. It is, that as sparks ascend, or as birds fly upward—following the laws of their being—so is trouble the lot of man. It certainly comes; and comes under the direction of a Being who has fixed the laws of the inferior creation. It would be wise for man, therefore, to resign himself to God in the times when those troubles come. He should not sit down and murmur at this condition of things, but

9 Which doeth great things and <sup>1</sup> unsearchable; marvellous things <sup>2</sup> without number:

<sup>1</sup> there is no search. <sup>2</sup> till there be no number.

should submit to it as the law of his being, and should have sufficient confidence in God to believe that he orders it aright.

8. *I would seek unto God.* Our translators have omitted here the adversative particle *וְיָ*, but, yet, nevertheless, and have thus marred the connexion. The meaning of Eliphaz I take to be, "that since affliction is ordered by an intelligent Being, and does not spring out of the ground, therefore he would commit his cause to God, and look to him." Jerome has well expressed it, *Quam ob rem ego deprecabor Dominum.* Some have understood this as meaning that Eliphaz himself was in the habit of committing his cause to God, and that he exhorted Job to imitate his example. But the correct sense is that which regards it as counsel given to Job to look to God because afflictions are the result of intelligent design, and because God had shown himself to be worthy of the confidence of men. The latter point Eliphaz proceeds to argue in the following verses.

9. *Which doeth great things.* The object of this is, to show why Job should commit his cause to God. The reason suggested is, that he had showed himself qualified to govern the world by the great and wonderful acts which he performed. Eliphaz, therefore, proceeds to expatiate on what God had done, and thus states the ancient belief in regard to his sovereignty over the world. This strain of reasoning continues to the end of the chapter. There is great beauty and force in it; and though we have, through the revelations of the New Testament, some more enlarged views of the government of God and of the design of affliction, yet perhaps there can be found nowhere a more beautiful argument to lead men to put confidence in God. The reason here stated is, that God does "great things," and therefore we should commit ourselves to him. His works are vast and

boundless; they are such as to impress the mind with a sense of its own immensity; and in such a being we should confide rather than in a feeble creature's arm. Who, when he contemplates the vast universe which God has made, and surveys the starry world under the light of the modern astronomy, can doubt that God does "great things," and that the interests which we commit to him are safe? ¶ *And unsearchable.* Marg. "There is no search." Sept. ἀνεξιχνίαστα—whose footsteps cannot be traced. The Hebrew word (חַקַּךְ) means, searching out, or examining; and the idea is here, that it is impossible fully to search out and comprehend what God does. See ch. xi. 7. This is stated as a reason why we should look to him. We should expect things in his administration which we cannot understand. The argument of Eliphaz seems to be, that it was a matter of indisputable fact that there are many things in the government of God which are above our comprehension; and when he afflicts us, we should feel that this is a part of the doings of the incomprehensible God. Such mysterious dealings are to be expected, and they should not be allowed for a moment to shake our confidence in him. ¶ *Marvellous things.* Things that are wonderful, and are fitted to excite amazement. See Notes on Isa. ix. 6. ¶ *Without number.* Marg. "Till there be no number." The sense is, that it is impossible to estimate the number of those things in the universe over which he presides, which are adapted to excite admiration. If the view of the universe entertained in the time of Eliphaz was fitted to overwhelm the mind by its vastness and by the number of the objects which were created, this astonishment is much greater now that the telescope has disclosed the wonders of the heavens above to man, and the microscope the not less amazing wonders of the world beneath him. Leuwenhoeck, by the aid of the microscope, discovered, he supposed, a thousand million animalculæ, whose united bulk did not exceed the size of a grain of sand—all of whom are distinct formations, with all the array of functions necessary to life. Of the number also of the larger works of

God, much interesting and overpowering truth is presented by the science of modern astronomy. As an instance of this, we may refer to the *Milky Way*, or the whitish, irregular zone, that goes round the whole heavens, and that can be seen at any season of the year, but particularly in the months of August, September, and November. "This vast portion of the heavens is found to consist wholly of stars, crowded into immense clusters. On first presenting a telescope of considerable power to this splendid zone, we are lost in astonishment at the number, the variety, and the beautiful configuration of the stars of which it is composed. In certain parts of it, every slight motion of the telescope presents new groups and new configurations; and the new and wondrous scene is continued over a space of many degrees in succession. In several fields of view, occupying a space of not more than twice the breadth of the moon, you perceive more of these twinkling luminaries than all the stars visible to the naked eye throughout the whole canopy of heaven. The late Sir W. Herschel, in passing his telescope along a space of this zone fifteen degrees long and two broad, descried at least fifty thousand stars, large enough to be distinctly counted; besides which, he suspected twice as many more, which could be seen only now and then by faint glimpses for want of sufficient light; that is, fifty times more than the acutest eye can discern in the whole heavens during the clearest night; and the space which they occupy is only the one thousand three hundred and seventy-fifth part of the visible canopy of the sky. On another occasion this astronomer perceived nearly six hundred stars in one field of view of his telescope; so that in the space of a quarter of an hour, one hundred and sixteen thousand stars passed in review before him. Now, were we to suppose every part of this zone equally filled with stars as the places now alluded to, there would be found in the Milky Way alone, no less than twenty millions one hundred and ninety thousand stars. In regard to the distance of some of these stars, it has been ascertained that some of the more

10 Who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the <sup>1</sup> fields:

<sup>1</sup> *out-places.*

remote are not less than five hundred times the distance of the nearest fixed star, or nearly two thousand billions of miles; a distance so great, that *light*, which flies at the rate of twelve millions of miles every minute, would require one thousand six hundred and forty years before it could traverse this mighty interval! The Milky Way is now, with good reason, considered to be the cluster of stars in which our sun is situated; and all the stars visible to the naked eye are only a few scattered orbs near the extremity of this cluster. Yet there is reason also to believe that the Milky Way, of which our system forms a part, is no more than a single *nebula*, of which several thousands have already been discovered, which compose the universe; and that it bears no more proportion to the whole sidereal heavens than a small dusky speck which our telescopes enable us to descry in the heavens. *Three thousand nebulae* have already been discovered. Suppose the number of stars in the whole Milky Way to be no more than ten millions, and that each of the nebulae, at an average, contains the same number; supposing, further, that only two thousand of the three thousand nebulae are resolvable into stars, and that the other thousand are masses of a shining fluid, not yet condensed by the Almighty into luminous globes, the number of stars or *suns* comprehended in that portion of the firmament which is within the reach of our telescopes, is *twenty thousand millions.*" Yet all this may be as nothing compared with the parts of the universe which we are unable to discover. See in the Christian Keepsake for 1840, an article by Thomas Dick, entitled "An Idea of the Universe." Comp. Notes on ch. ix. 9.

10. *Who giveth rain upon the earth.* In the previous verse, Eliphaz had said, in general, that God did wonderful things—things which are fitted to lead us to put our trust in him. In this and

11 To set up on high those that be low; that those which mourn may be exalted to safety.

the succeeding verses he descends to particulars, and specifies those things which show that God is worthy to be confided in. This enunciation continues to ver. 16, and the general scope is, that the agency of God is seen everywhere; and that his providential dealings are adapted to impress man with elevated ideas of his justice and goodness. Eliphaz begins with *the rain*, and says that the fact that God sends it upon the earth was fitted to lead man to confide in him. He means, that while the sun, and moon, and seasons, have stated times, and are governed by settled laws, the rain seems to be sent directly by God, and is imparted at such times as are best. It is wholly under his control, and furnishes a constant evidence of his benevolence. Without it, every vegetable would dry up, and every animal on the earth would soon die. The word *earth* here refers probably to the cultivated part of the earth—the fields that are under tillage. Thus Eichhorn renders it, *Angebauten Feldern*. On the interest which the phenomena of rain excited among the ancient sages of Idumea, and the laws by which it is produced, see Notes on chs. xxxvii. 6, 15, 16, xxxviii. 22—28. ¶ *And sendeth waters.* That is, showers. ¶ *Upon the fields* Marg. *out-places.* Heb. מוצאות —*out of doors, outside, abroad*, meaning the fields out of cities and towns. Eichhorn renders it, "the pastures," *auf Trijten*. The meaning is, that the whole country is watered; and the fact that God gives rain in this manner, is a reason why we should put confidence in him. It shows that he is a benevolent Being, since it contributes so essentially to human life and happiness, and since no other being but God can cause it.

11. *To set up on high.* That is, who sets up on high; or God exalts those who are low. From the works of nature Eliphaz passes to the dealings of God with *men*, as designed to show that he

12 He <sup>c</sup> disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their

<sup>c</sup> Ne. 4. 15.

was worthy of confidence. The first proof is, that he showed himself to be the friend of the humble and the afflicted, and often exalted those who were in lowly circumstances, in a manner which evinced his direct interposition. It is to be remembered here, that Eliphaz is detailing the result of his own observation, and stating the reasons which he had observed for putting confidence in God; and the meaning here is, that he had so often seen this done as to show that God was the friend of the humble and the poor. This sentiment was afterwards expressed with great beauty by Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus:

He hath put down the mighty from their seats,  
And exalted them of low degree;  
He hath filled the hungry with good things,  
And the rich he hath sent empty away.

Luke, i. 52, 53.

¶ *That those which mourn may be exalted to safety.* Or rather, they who mourn are exalted to a place of safety. The sense is, that God did this: and that, therefore, there was ground of confidence in him. The word rendered, "those which mourn," (מַרְתָּן) is from מָרַךְ, to be turbid or foul as a torrent, Job, vi. 16; hence to go about in filthy garments, like mourners, to mourn. The general sense of the Hebrew word, as in Arabic, is to be squalid, dark, filthy, dusky, obscure; and hence it denotes those who are afflicted, which is its sense here. The LXX render it, ἀπολωλῶτας, *the lost*, or those who are perished. The sense is plain. God raises up the bowed down, the oppressed, and the afflicted. Eliphaz undoubtedly referred to instances which had come under his own observation, when persons who had been in very depressed circumstances had been raised up to situations of comfort, honor, and safety; and that in a manner which was a manifest interposition of his Providence. From this he argued that those who were in circumstances of great trial should put their trust in him. Cases of this kind often occur: and a careful observation of the

hands cannot perform *their* <sup>1</sup> enterprise.

<sup>1</sup> or, *anything*.

dealings of God with the afflicted, would undoubtedly furnish materials for an argument like that on which Eliphaz relied in this instance.

12. *He disappointeth the devices of the crafty.* He foils them in their schemes, or makes their plans vain. This too was the result of close observation on the part of Eliphaz. He had seen instances where the plans of crafty, designing, and artful men had been defeated, and where the straightforward had been prospered and honored. Such cases led him to believe that God was the friend of virtue, and was worthy of entire confidence. ¶ *So that their hands.* So that they. The hands are the instruments by which we accomplish our plans. ¶ *Their enterprise.* Marg. Or, *anything*. Heb. מְצִיטָּה. This word properly means *uprightness*, from מָצַץ; then, help, deliverance, Job, vi. 13; then, purpose, undertaking, enterprise, *i. e.*, what one wishes to set up or establish. Gesenius. This is its meaning here. Vulg. "Their hands cannot finish (*implere*) what they had begun." Sept. "Their hands cannot perform that which is true," — ἀληθείας. The Chaldee Paraphrase refers this to the defeat of the purposes of the Egyptians: "Who made vain the thoughts of the Egyptians, who acted wisely [or cunningly — מְחִיכִי], that they might do evil to Israel, but their hands did not perform the work of their wisdom (ver. 13), who took the wise men of Pharaoh in their own wisdom, and the counsel of their perverse astrologers he made to return upon them." The general sense is, that artful and designing men — men who work in the dark, and who form secret purposes of evil, are disappointed and foiled. Eliphaz probably had seen instances of this, and he now attributes it to God as rendering him worthy of the confidence of men. It is still true. The crafty and the designing are often foiled in such a manner as to show that it is wholly of God. He exposes

13 He <sup>d</sup> taketh the wise in their own craftiness: and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong.

d 1 Co. 3. 19.

their designs in this way, and shows that he is the friend of the sincere and the honest; and in doing this, he shows that he is worthy the confidence of his people.

13. *He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.* This passage is quoted by the apostle Paul in 1 Cor. iii. 19, with the usual formula in referring to the Old Testament, γέγραπται γάρ, "for it is written," showing that he regarded it as a part of the inspired oracles of God. The word *wise* here undoubtedly means, the cunning, the astute, the crafty, and the designing. It cannot mean those who are truly wise in the Scripture sense; but the meaning is, that those who form plans which they expect to accomplish by cunning and craft, are often the victims of their own designs. The same sentiment not unfrequently occurs in the Scriptures and elsewhere, and has all the aspect of being a proverb. Thus in Ps. vii. 15:

He made a pit and digged it,  
And is fallen into the ditch which he made.

So Ps. ix. 15:

The heathen are sunk down into the pit that  
they made;  
In the net which they hid is their own foot  
taken.

So Ps. xxxv. 8:

Let his net that he hath hid catch himself;  
Into that very destruction let him fall.

So Ps. xxxvii. 15:

Their sword shall enter into their own heart,  
And their bow shall be broken.

Comp. Eurip. Med. 403:

Καλῶν δὲ πάντων τέκτονες σφώταται.

See also the same sentiment in Lucretius, v. 1151:

"Circumretit enim vis atque injuria quemque,  
Atque, unde exorta est, ad eum plerumque re-  
vertit."

"For force and rapine in their craftiest nets  
Of their own sons entangle; and the plague  
Tenfold recoils."

14 They <sup>l</sup> meet with darkness in the daytime, and grope in the noonday as in the night.

<sup>l</sup> or, *run into.* Is. 59. 10. Am. 8. 9.

It is to be remembered that Eliphaz here speaks of his own observation, and of that as a reason for putting confidence in God. The sentiment is, that he had observed that a straightforward, honest, and upright course, was followed with the divine favor and blessing; but that a man who attempted to carry his plans by intrigue and stratagem would not be permanently successful. Sooner or later his cunning would recoil upon himself, and he would experience the disastrous consequences of such a course. It is still true. A man is always sure of ultimate success and prosperity, if he is straightforward and honest. He never can be sure of it if he attempts to carry his plans by management. Other men may evince as much cunning as himself; and when his net *springs*, it may include himself as well as those for whom he set it. It will be well for him if it is not made to spring on him, while others escape. ¶ *And the counsel of the froward.* The design of the perverse. The word here rendered "froward,"

δῖπρε, is from διῆ, to twist, to twine, to spin. It then means, to be twisted, crooked, crafty, deceitful. Here it means, those who are crooked, artful, designing. Sept. πολυπλόκων, *the involved—the much-entangled.* ¶ *Is carried headlong.* Heb., is precipitated, or hastened. There is not time for it to be matured; there is a development of the scheme before it is ripe, and the trick is detected before there is time to put it in execution. Nothing can be more true than this often is now. Something that could not be anticipated develops the design, and brings the dark plot out to mid-day; and God shows that he is the foe of all such schemes

14. *They meet with darkness in the daytime.* Marg., *run into.* Comp. Notes on Isa. lix. 10. The sense is, that where there is really no obstacle to the accomplishment of an honest plan—any more



15 But <sup>c</sup> he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth,

*c* Ps. 107. 41.

than there is for a man to walk in the day-time—they become perplexed and embarrassed, as much as a man would be, should sudden darkness come around him at mid-day. The same sentiment occurs in ch. xii. 25. A life of honesty and uprightness will be attended with prosperity, but a man who attempts to carry his plans by trick and art will meet with unexpected embarrassments. The sentiment in all these expressions is, that God embarrasses the cunning, the crafty, and the artful, but gives success to those who are upright; and that therefore he is worthy of confidence.

15. *But he saveth the poor from the sword.* He shows himself to be the friend and protector of the defenceless. The phrase “from the sword, from their mouth,” has been variously interpreted. Dr. Good renders it,

So he saveth the persecutors from their mouth,  
And the helpless from the hand of the violent.

Noyes,

So he saveth the persecuted from their mouth,  
The oppressed from the hand of the mighty.

This rendering is obtained by changing the points in the word *מִפִּי*, from the sword, to *מִחַיִּי*, making it the Hophal participle from *חָרַב*, to make desolate. This was proposed by Capellus, and has been adopted by Durell, Michaelis, Dathe, Doederlin, and others. Rosenmüller pronounces it wholly unauthorized. Jerome renders it, *à gladio oris eorum*—“from the sword of their mouth.” It seems to me that the whole verse may be literally rendered, “he saveth from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the strong, the poor.” According to this version, the phrase “from their mouth” may either mean from their mouth, *i. e.*, the edge of the sword, using the plural for the singular, or from the mouth of oppressors, using it to represent their violence, and their disposition to devour the poor. The latter is more probably the true interpretation, and there is no need of a change in the points in the Hebrew. Thus interpreted,

and from the hand of the mighty.

16 So the poor hath hope, and iniquity stoppeth her mouth.

the sense is, that God preserves the poor from oppression; or, in other words, that he befriends them, and is therefore worthy of confidence. This sentiment accords with what is found everywhere in the Bible.

16. *So the poor hath hope.* From the interposition of God. They are not left in a sad and comfortless condition. They are permitted to regard God as their protector and friend, and to look forward to another and a better world. This sentiment accords with all that is elsewhere said in the Scriptures, that the offers of mercy are specially made to the poor, and that they are peculiarly the objects of the divine compassion. ¶ *And iniquity stoppeth her mouth.* That is, the wicked are confounded when they see all their plans foiled, and themselves entangled in the snares which they have laid for others. A similar sentiment occurs in Ps. cvii. 41, 42 :

Yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction,  
And maketh him families like a flock.  
The righteous shall see it and rejoice,  
And all iniquity shall stop her mouth.

It is to be remembered that Eliphaz states this as the result of his own observation, and as clearly demonstrating in his view that there is a superintending and overruling Providence. A careful observation of the course of events would lead undoubtedly to the same conclusion, and this has been embodied in almost every language by some proverbial sentiment. We express it by saying that “honesty is the best policy;” a proverb that is undoubtedly founded in wisdom. The sentiment is, that if a man wishes long to prosper, he should pursue a straightforward and an honest course; that cunning, intrigue, underhanded dealing, and mere management, will sooner or later defeat itself, and recoil on the head of him who uses it; and that therefore, if there were no higher motive than self-interest, a man should be honest, frank, and open. See this argument stated at greater length, and with great beauty, in Psalm xxxvii.

17 Behold, happy <sup>c</sup> is the man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty.

18 For <sup>e</sup> he maketh sore, and

f He. 12. 5. Ja. i. 12.

g De. 32. 39.

17. *Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth.* This verse commences a new argument, designed to show that afflictions are followed by so important advantages as to make it proper that we should submit to them without a murmur. The sentiment in this verse, if not expressly quoted, is probably alluded to by the Apostle Paul in Heb. xii. 5. The same thought frequently occurs in the Bible. See James, i. 12. Prov. iii. 11, 12. The sense is plain, that God confers a favor on us when he recalls us from our sins by the corrections of his paternal hand—as a father confers a favor on a child whom he restrains from sin by suitable correction. The way in which this is done, Eliphaz proceeds to state at length. He does it in most beautiful language, and in a manner entirely in accordance with the sentiments which occur elsewhere in the Bible. The word rendered *correcteth* (יָכַח) means, to argue, convince, reprove, punish, and to judge. It here refers to any of the modes by which God calls men from their sins, and leads them to walk in the paths of virtue. The word “happy” here means, that the condition of such an one is blessed (אַשְׁרֵי); Gr. μακάριος—not that there is happiness in the suffering. The sense is, that it is a favor when God recalls his friends from their wanderings, and from the error of their ways, rather than suffer them to go on to ruin. He does me a kindness who shows me a precipice down which I am in danger of falling; he lays me under obligation to him who even with violence saves me from flames which would devour me. Eliphaz undoubtedly means to be understood as implying that Job had been guilty of transgression, and that God had taken this method to recall him from the error of his ways. That he had sinned, and that these calamities

bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

19 He <sup>h</sup> shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.

h Ps. 91.

had come as a consequence, he seems never once to doubt; yet he supposes that the affliction was meant in kindness, and proceeds to state that if Job would receive it in a proper manner, it might be attended still with important benefits. ¶ *Therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty.* “Do not regret (עָנַתְּ), Sept. μή ἀπαυαίνου—the means which God is using to admonish you.” There is direct allusion here undoubtedly to the feelings which Job had manifested (ch. iii.); and the object of Eliphaz is, to show him that there were important benefits to be derived from affliction which should make him willing to bear it without murmuring. Job had exhibited, as Eliphaz thought, a disposition to reject the lessons which afflictions were designed to teach him, and to spurn the admonitions of the Almighty. From that state of mind he would recall him, and would impress on him the truth that there were such advantages to be derived from those afflictions as should make him willing to endure all that was laid upon him without a murmur.

18. *For he maketh sore.* That is, he afflicts. ¶ *And bindeth up.* He heals. The phrase is taken from the custom of binding up a wound. See Notes on Isa. i. 6, xxxviii. 21. This was a common mode of healing among the Hebrews; and the practice of medicine appears to have been confined much to external applications. The meaning of this verse is, that afflictions come from God, and that he only can support, comfort, and restore. Health is his gift; and all the consolation which we need, and for which we can look, must come from him.

19. *He shall deliver thee in six troubles.* Six is used here to denote an indefinite number, meaning, that he would support in many troubles. This mode of speech

20 In famine <sup>i</sup> he shall redeem thee from death: and in war from the <sup>1</sup> power of the sword.

<sup>i</sup> Ps. 37. 19.

<sup>1</sup> hands.

is not uncommon among the Hebrews, where one number is mentioned, so that an extreme number may be immediately added. The method is, to mention a number within the limit, and then to add one more, meaning, that in *all* instances the thing referred to would occur. The *limit* here is seven, with the Hebrews a complete and perfect number; and the idea is, that in any succession of troubles, however numerous, God was able to deliver. Similar expressions not unfrequently occur. Thus in Amos, i. 3, 6, 9, 11, 13, ii. 1, 4, 6:

Thus saith the Lord: [four,  
For three transgressions of Damascus, and for  
1 will not turn away the punishment thereof.

Thus saith the Lord:  
For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four,  
I will not turn away the punishment thereof.

Thus saith the Lord.  
For three transgressions of Tyrus, and for four,  
I will not turn away the punishment thereof.

Thus in Prov. xxx. 15:

There are three things that are never satisfied,  
Yea, four things say not, It is enough.

There be three things that are too wonderful  
for me,  
Yea, four, which I know not. Ver. 18.

For three things the earth is disquieted,  
And for four which it cannot bear. Ver. 21.

There be three things that go well,  
Yea, four are comely in going;  
A lion, which is strongest among beasts,  
And turneth not away for any;  
A grey-hound;  
An he-goat also;  
And a king, against whom there is no rising up.  
Vs. 29—31.

Comp. Homer, Iliad, vi. 174:

<sup>1</sup> Ἑννῆμαρ ξείνισσε καὶ ἐννέα βοῦς ἰέπυσεν.

An enumeration, in regard to number, similar to the one before us, occurs in Prov. vi. 16:

These six things doth the Lord hate;  
Yea, seven are an abomination to him.

¶ *There shall no evil touch thee.* That is, permanently; for he could not mean that he would not be subjected to calamity at all, since by the very supposition he was a sufferer. But the sense

21 Thou shalt be hid <sup>2</sup> from the scourge of the tongue: <sup>k</sup> neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh.

<sup>2</sup> or, when the tongue scourgeth.

<sup>k</sup> Ps. 31. 20.

is, that God would save from those calamities.

20. *In famine he shall redeem thee.* That is, will deliver thee from death. On the meaning of the word *redeem*, see Notes on Isaiah, ch. xliii. 1, 3. ¶ *From the power of the sword.* Marg. as in Heb., *hands*. That is, he should not be slain by armed men. A *mouth* is often attributed to the sword in the Scriptures, because it devours; *hands* are attributed to it here, because it is by the hand that we perform an undertaking, and the sword is personified, and represented as acting as a conscious agent. Comp. Ezek. xxxv. 5, *margin*. The meaning is, that God would protect those who put their trust in him, in times of calamity and war. Doubtless Eliphaz had seen instances enough of this kind to lead him to this general conclusion, where the pious poor had been protected in a remarkable manner, and where signal deliverances had been vouchsafed to the righteous in danger.

21. *Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue.* Marg. Or, *when the tongue scourgeth*. The word rendered "scourge" (צוּר) means, properly, a whip. It is used of God when he *scourges* men by calamities and punishments, Isa. x. 26; Job, ix. 23. See the use of the verb צוּר in ch. i. 7. Here it is used to denote a *slandering* tongue, as being that which inflicts a severe wound upon the reputation and peace of an individual. The idea is, that God would guard the reputation of those who commit themselves to him, and that they shall be secure from *slander*, "whose breath," Shakspeare says, "outvenoms all the worms of Nile." ¶ *Neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh.* That is, your mind shall be calm in those calamities which threaten destruction. When war rages, when the tempest howls, when the pestilence breathes upon a community, then your

22 At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh: neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth.

mind shall be at peace. A similar thought occurs in Isa. xxvi. 3: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee;" and the same sentiment is beautifully illustrated at length in the XCist Psalm. The Chaldee Paraphrase applies all this to events which had occurred in the history of the Hebrews. Thus, ver. 20: "In the famine in Egypt, he redeemed thee from death; and in the war with Amalek, from being slain by the sword." Ver. 21: "In the injury inflicted by the tongue of Balaam thou wert hid among the clouds, and thou didst not fear from the desolation of the Midianites when it came." Ver. 22: "In the desolation of Sihon, and in the famine of the desert, thou didst laugh; and of the camps of Og, who was like a wild beast of the earth, thou wert not afraid."

22. *At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh.* That is, thou shalt be perfectly safe and happy. They shall not come upon thee; and when they approach with threatening aspect, thou shalt smile with conscious security. The word here rendered famine (פָּנָה) is an unusual word, and differs from that occurring in ver. 20, אָרָב. This word is derived from פָּנָה—to languish, to pine from hunger and thirst. It then means the languid and feeble state which exists where there is a want of proper nutriment. A sentiment similar to that which is here expressed occurs in Martial, iv. 19. 4:

"*Ridebis ventos hoc munere tectus, et imbres*"  
¶ *Neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth.* Wild beasts in new countries are always objects of dread, and in the fastnesses and deserts of Arabia they were especially so. They abounded there; and one of the highest images of happiness there would be, that there would be perfect safety from them. A similar promise occurs in Ps. xci. 13.

23 For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field: and the beasts<sup>1</sup> of the field shall be at peace with thee.

Is. II. 9.

Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder; The young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under foot.

And a promise similar to this was made by the Saviour to his disciples: "They shall take up servants; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them." The sentiment of Eliphaz is, that they who put their trust in God would find protection, and have the consciousness that they were secure wherever they were.

23. *For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field.* In the Hebrew, "There shall be a covenant between thee and the stones of the field." The sense is, they shall not harm thee. They are here spoken of as enemies that were made to be at peace, and that would not annoy or injure. It is to be remembered that this was spoken in Arabia, where rocks and stones abounded, and where travelling, from that cause, was difficult and dangerous. The sense here is, as I understand it, that he would be permitted to make his way in ease and safety. Tindal renders it:

But the castles in the land shall be confederate with thee;

The beasts of the fealde shall give thee peace.

Some have supposed that the meaning is, that the land would be free from stones that rendered it barren, and would be rendered fertile if the favor of God was sought. Shaw, in his Travels, supposes that it refers to the custom of walking over stones, in which the feet are liable to be injured every moment, and that the meaning is, that that danger would be averted by the divine interposition. By others it has been conjectured that the allusion is to a custom which is known as *shopelism*, of which Egmont and Heyman (Reisen, II. Th. S. 156) give the following account: "That in Arabia, if any one is living at variance with another, he places on his land stones as a warning that no one should dare to plow it, as by

24 And thou shalt know <sup>1</sup> that thy tabernacle *shall be* in peace; and thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not <sup>2</sup> sin.

<sup>1</sup> or, *that peace is thy tabernacle.* <sup>2</sup> or, *err.*

doing it he would expose himself to the danger of being punished by him who had placed the stones there." This custom is also referred to by Ulpian (L. ix. de officio Proconsulis), and in the Greek Pandects, Lib. lx.; Tit. xxii., Leg. 9. It may be doubted, however, whether this custom was as early as the time of Job, or was so common then as to make it probable that the allusion is to it. Rosenmüller supposes the meaning to be, "Thy field shall be free from stones, which would render it unfruitful." Alte u. neue Morgenland, *in loc.* Other explanations may be seen in Rosenmüller (Commentary); but it seems to me that the view presented above, that travelling would be rendered safe and pleasant, is the true one. Such a promise would be among the rich blessings in a country like Arabia.

24. *And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle shall be in peace.* Thy tent (תִּבְרָתְךָ), showing that it was common then to dwell in tents. The sense is, that when he was away from home he would have confidence that his dwelling was secure, and his family safe. This would be an assurance producing no small degree of consolation in a country abounding in wild beasts and robbers. Such is the nature of the blessing which Eliphaz says the man would have who put his confidence in God, and committed his cause to him. To a certain extent this was, and is, undoubtedly true. A man cannot indeed have miraculous assurance when from home, that his wife and children are still alive, and in health; nor can he be certain that his dwelling is not wrapped in flames, or that it has been preserved from the intrusion of evil-minded men. But he may feel assured that all is under the wise control of God; that whatever occurs will be by his permission and direction, and will tend to ultimate good. He may also, with calmness and peace, commit his home, with all that is dear to

25 Thou shalt know also that thy seed *shall be* <sup>3</sup> great, and thine offspring as the grass of the earth.

<sup>3</sup> or, *much.*

him, to God, and feel that in his hands all is safe. ¶ *And thou shalt visit thy habitation.* That is, on the return from a journey. ¶ *And shalt not sin.* This is a very unhappy translation. The true sense is, thou shalt not *miss* thy dwelling; thou shalt not wander away lost, to return no more. The word here used, and which is rendered "sin" in our common version, is כָּחַטָּה, *khâtâ*. It is true that it is commonly rendered *to sin*, and that it often has this sense. But it properly means *to miss*; that is, not to hit the mark, spoken of an archer, Judges, xx. 16; then, to make a false step, to stumble or fall, Prov. xix. 2. It thus accords exactly in sense with the Greek ἀμαρτάνω. Here the original sense of the Hebrew word should be retained, meaning, that he would not *miss* the way to his dwelling; that is, that he would be permitted to return to it in safety. Gesenius, however, renders it, "Thou musteredst thy pasture, (*flocks*,) and missest naught:" that is, nothing is gone; all thy flocks are there. But the more obvious sense, and a sense which the connexion demands, is that which refers the whole description to a man who is on a journey, and who is exposed to the dangers of wild beasts, and to the perils of a rough and stony way, but who is permitted to visit his home without missing it or being disappointed. A great variety of interpretations have been given of the passage, which may be seen in Rosenmüller and Good. Many suppose it means that he should review his domestic affairs, and find all to his mind; or should find that everything was in its place, or was as it should be. It cannot be doubted that the Hebrew word "*visit*" (בָּרַךְ) will bear this interpretation, but that above proposed seems to me best to suit the connexion. The margin correctly renders it, *err.*

25. *Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great.* Marg., *much.* That is,

26 Thou shalt come to *thy* grave in a full age, <sup>n</sup> like as a shock of corn <sup>1</sup> cometh in his season.

m Pr. 9. 11.

<sup>1</sup> ascendeth.

thy posterity shall be numerous. This was one of the blessings supposed to be connected with the favour of God. See Notes on Isa. liii. 10. ¶ *And thine offspring as the grass of the earth.* On the meaning of the word here rendered *offspring*, see Notes on Isa. xlviii. 19. Nothing is more common in the Scriptures than to compare a prosperous and a happy man to a green and flourishing tree. See Ps. i. 3; xcii. 12—14. The idea here is, that the righteous would have a numerous and a happy posterity, and that the divine favor to them would be shown by the blessing of God on their children. Comp. Ps. cxxviii. 1, 3.

Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord,  
That walketh in his ways.

Thy wife shall be a fruitful vine by the side of  
thine house;

Thy children like olive-plants round about thy  
table.

26. *Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age.* That is, thou shalt have long life; thou shalt not be cut down prematurely, nor by any sudden calamity. It is to be remembered that long life was regarded as an eminent blessing in ancient times. See Notes on Isa. lxxv. 22. ¶ *Like as a shock of corn cometh in his season.* Marg., *ascendeth.* As a sheaf of grain is harvested when it is fully ripe. This is a beautiful comparison, and the meaning is obvious. He would not be cut off before his plans were fully matured; before the fruits of righteousness had ripened in his life. He would be taken away when he was ripe for heaven—as the yellow grain is for the harvest. Grain is not cut down when it is green; and the meaning of Eliphaz is, that it is as desirable that man should live to a good old age before he is gathered to his fathers, as it is that grain should be suffered to stand until it is fully ripe.

27. *Lo this.* All this that I have said; the truth of all the remarks which

27 Lo this, we have searched <sup>n</sup> it, so it is; hear it, and know thou *it* for <sup>2</sup> thy good.

n Pr. 2. 3—5.

<sup>2</sup> thyself. Pr. 9. 12.

I have made. ¶ *We have searched it.* We have, by careful observation of the course of events, come to these conclusions. These are our views of the providence of God, and of the principles of his government, as far as we have had the opportunity of observing, and they are well worthy of your attention. The sentiments in these two chapters indicate close and accurate observation; and if we think that the observation was not always wholly accurate, or that the principles were carried farther than facts would warrant, or that Eliphaz applied them with somewhat undue severity to the case of Job, we are to remember that this was in the infancy of the world, that they had few historical records, and that they had no written revelation. If they were favored with occasional revelations, as Eliphaz claimed, (ch. iv. 12, seq.,) yet they were few in number, and at distant intervals, and the divine communications pertained to but few points. Though it may without impropriety be maintained that some of the views of Eliphaz and his friends were not wholly accurate, yet we may safely ask, Where among the Greek and Roman sages can views of the divine government be found that equal these in correctness, or that are expressed with equal force and beauty? For profound and accurate observation, for beauty of thought and sublimity of expression, the sage of Teman will not fall behind the sages of Athens; and not the least interesting thing in the contemplation of the book of Job is the comparison which we are almost of necessity compelled to make between the observations on the course of events which were made in Arabia, and those which were made by the philosophers of the ancient heathen world. Is it improper to suppose that one design of this book was to show how far the human mind could go, with the aid of

occasional revelations on a few points, in ascertaining the principles of the divine administration, and to demonstrate that, after all, the mind needed a fuller revelation to enable man to comprehend

the truths pertaining to the kingdom of God? ¶ *Know thou it for thy good. Marg* as in Heb., *thyself*. These principles are such that they are of importance for you to understand and to apply.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ANALYSIS OF CHAPTERS VI. AND VII.

THESE two chapters comprise the answer of Job to the speech of Eliphaz. There is much strong emotion in this reply; much that expresses the depth of his sorrow; much real piety; and much also that cannot be justified in his impatience, and in his remonstrances with God for afflicting him. He felt keenly the remarks of Eliphaz, and in the anguish of his soul, he gives vent to expressions which he himself afterwards sees to be improper, and for which, in the close, he makes humble and penitent acknowledgment to God. In reply to the harsh and severe insinuations of Eliphaz, he justifies the bitterness of his complaints by the severity of the affliction which he had been called to endure, ch. vi. 2—13. This object leads him into a particular statement of the depth and extent of his sorrows, as if they had not been understood or appreciated by his friends. He wishes (vs. 2, 3) that his grief were thoroughly and attentively considered; says (ver. 4) that the arrows of the Almighty are in him, and that the terrors of God are arrayed against him; remarks that he did not complain without cause, any more than the wild ass or the ox when they were perishing, vs. 5—7; reiterates his request that God would suffer him to die, vs. 8, 9; repeats the thought that he would then have comfort in the grave, ver. 10; and complains bitterly that his strength was insufficient to bear these heavy trials. He then goes on to say, that a man in such circumstances ought to have the sympathy of his friends, but that *his* friends had deceived him, and had greatly aggravated his sufferings, vs. 14—23. They had shown themselves to be like a brook in the desert, where a company of travellers expected to find water, but which they found to be dried up, vs. 15—23. He then (vs. 24—30) earnestly requests his friends to consider more attentively his circumstances, and to see whether his strong expressions could not be justified. He evidently supposes that they did not understand the depth of his sorrows, and did not sympathize with him as they ought to do. In justification of his feelings (ch. vii. 1—11), he recapitulates his sufferings. Eliphaz had exhorted him to commit himself to God, and to bear all this with a calm and submissive mind. To all this he says (ch. vii. 1) that life was short, and that the days of man were like those of an hireling, who anxiously longed for the close of the day; that his was a life of toil and pain, where it was proper to look for the shades of the evening, vs. 2, 3; that his days and nights were filled with vanity and sorrow, vs. 3, 4. He describes his disease as filling his flesh with worms and clods of dust, ver. 5; and says that his days are swift, and that he must soon vanish away like a cloud, and be known no more, ver. 10. How then, he asks, could he restrain his anguish? How could he help speaking in the bitterness of his soul? ver. 11. Hurried on by the deep sense of his sorrows, he now allows himself to expostulate in a very improper manner with God, and to remonstrate with him in great severity of language for thus afflicting him, vs. 12—19. He asks whether he was a sea or a whale, that God should watch him in this manner, ver. 12; says that when he would take rest on his bed, then God frightened him with distressing visions, vs. 13, 14; that such was his condition, that he loathed and hated his life, vs. 15, 16, and demands with impatience what is man that God should thus visit him, and that he would not for the briefest time let him alone, vs. 17—19; and, continuing the same bitter language of complaint, he asks with impatience why, supposing he *had* sinned, was he of so much consequence as to attract, in a special manner, the attention of the Almighty? What injury had his offence done to God, that he should visit him thus? Why did not God forgive the sin, and take his heavy hand from him? Why would he crush him down to the grave? vs. 20, 21. Substantially the same state of feeling is evinced in this speech of Job which was shown in ch. iii.; and while there is great beauty, and much of the workings of the human heart developed, still there is much, as we shall see, which cannot be commended or approved.

**B**UT Job answered and said, lamity <sup>1</sup> laid in the balances together! 2 Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my ca-

<sup>1</sup> *lifted up.*

2. *Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed.* The word rendered *grief* here may mean, either vexation, trouble, grief, Eccl. i. 18; ii. 23; or it

3 For now it would be heavier than the sand <sup>a</sup> of the sea: therefore <sup>1</sup> my words are swallowed up.

<sup>a</sup> Pr. 27. 3. <sup>1</sup> i.e., *I want words to express my grief.* Ps. 77. 4.

may mean *anger*, Deut. xxxii. 19. Ezek. xx. 28. It is rendered by the LXX here, ὀργή—*anger*; by Jerome, *peccata*—*sins*. The sense of the whole passage may either be, that Job wished his anger or his complaints to be laid in the balance with his calamity, to see if one was more weighty than the other—meaning, that he had not complained unreasonably or unjustly (*Rosenmüller*); or that he wished that his afflictions might be put into one scale, and the sands of the sea in another, and the one weighed against the other (*Noyes*); or simply, that he desired that his sorrows should be accurately estimated. This latter is, I think, the true sense of the passage. He supposed his friends had not understood and appreciated his sufferings; that they were disposed to blame him without understanding the extent of his sorrows, and he desires that they would estimate them aright before they condemned him. In particular, he seems to have supposed that Eliphaz had not done justice to the depth of his sorrows in the remarks which he had just made. The figure of *weighing* actions or sorrows is not uncommon or unnatural. It means, to take an exact estimate of their amount. So we speak of *heavy* calamities, of afflictions that *crush* us by their weight, &c. ¶ *Laid in the balances.* Marg., *Lifted up.* That is, raised up and put in the scales, or put in the scales and then raised up—as is common in weighing. ¶ *Together* (תַּיְתוּ). At the same time; that *all* my sorrows, griefs, and woes were piled on the scales, and then weighed. He supposed that only a partial estimate had been formed of the extent of his calamities.

3. *Heavier than the sand of the sea.* That is, they would be found to be insupportable. Who could bear up the sands of the sea? So Job says of his

4 For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors <sup>b</sup> of God do set themselves in array against me.

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 88. 15, 16.

sorrows. A comparison somewhat similar is found in Prov. xxvii. 3.

Heavy is a stone, and weighty the sand of the sea,  
But a fool's wrath is heavier than them both.

¶ *My words are swallowed up.* Marg., *I want words to express my grief.* This expresses the true sense—but not with the same poetic beauty. We express the same idea when we say that we are *choked* with grief: we are so overwhelmed with sorrow, that we cannot speak. Any very deep emotion prevents the power of utterance. So in Ps. xxvii. 4:

Thou holdest mine eyes waking:  
I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

So the well-known expressions in Virgil—

“Obstupui, steteruntque comæ, et vox faucibus hæsit.”

There has been, however, considerable variety in the interpretation of the word here rendered *swallowed up*—אָפֶּקֶט. Gesenius supposes that it means to speak rashly, to talk at random, and that the idea is, that Job now admits that his remarks had been unguarded—“therefore were my words rash.” The same sense Castell gives to the Arabic word. Schultens renders it, “therefore are my words tempestuous or fretful.” Rosenmüller, “my words exceed due moderation.” Castelli, “my words fail.” Luther, “therefore it is vain that I speak.” The LXX, “but my words seem to be evil.” Jerome, “my words are full of grief.” In this variety it is difficult to determine the meaning; but probably the old interpretation is to be retained, by which the word is derived from אָפֶּקֶט, *to absorb*, *to swallow up*. Comp. Prov. xx. 25; Obad. 16; Job, xxxix. 30; Prov. xxiii. 2. This word does not elsewhere occur.

4. *For the arrows of the Almighty are within me.* That is, it is not a light



affliction that I endure. I am wounded in a manner which could not be caused by man—called to endure a severity of suffering which shows that it proceeds from the Almighty. Thus called to suffer what man could not cause, he maintains that it is right for him to complain, and that the words which he employed were not an improper expression of the extent of the grief. ¶ *The poison whereof drinketh up my spirit.* Takes away my vigor, my comfort, my life. He here compares his afflictions with being wounded with *poisoned* arrows. Such arrows were not unfrequently used among the ancients. The object was to secure certain death, even where the wound caused by the arrow itself would not produce it. Poison was made so concentrated, that the smallest quantity conveyed by the point of an arrow would render death inevitable. This practice contributed much to the barbarity of savage war. Thus Virgil speaks of poisoned arrows:

"Ungere tela manu, ferrumque armare veneno."  
ÆN. ix. 773.

And again, ÆN. x. 140.

"Vulnera dirigere, et calamos armare veneno."

So Ovid, Lib. 1. de Ponto, Epis. ii. of the Scythians:

"Qui, mortis sævo gement ut vulnere causas,  
Omnia viæ cæco spicula felle linunt."

Comp. Justin, Lib. ii. c. 10, § 2; Gro-tius, de Jure Belli et Pacis; and Virgil, ÆN. xii. 857. In the Odyssey, i. 260, seq., we read of Ulysses that he went to Ephyra, a city of Thessaly, to obtain from Ilus, the son of Mermer, deadly poison, that he might smear it over the iron points of his arrows. The pestilence which produced so great a destruction in the Grecian camp is also said by Homer (Iliad, i. 48) to have been caused by arrows shot from the bow of Apollo. The phrase, "drinketh up the spirit," is very expressive. We speak now of the sword *thirsting for blood*; but this language is more expressive and striking. The figure is not uncommon in the poetry of the East and of the ancients. In the poem of Zohair, the third of the Moallakat, or those transcribed in golden letters, and suspended in the temple of

Mecca, the same image occurs. It is thus rendered by Sir William Jones:

"Their javelins had no share in drinking the blood of Naufel."

A similar expression occurs in Sophocles in Trachin. ver. 1061, as quoted by Schultens, when describing the pestilence in which Hercules suffered:

ἐκ δὲ χλαυρὸν ἄμα μου  
Πέπωκεν ἥδη—

This has been imitated by Cicero in Tusculan. Disp. ii. 8:

"Hæc me irretivit veste furiali inscium, Quæ lateri inhærens morsu lacerat viscera, Urgensque graviter, pulmonum haurit spiritus. Jam decolorem sanguinem omnem exsorbuît."

So Lucan, Pharsa. ix. 741, seq., gives a similar description:

"Ecce subit virus tacitum, carpitque medullas Ignis edax, calidæque incendit viscera tabe. Ebibit humorem circa vitalia fusum Pestis, et in sicco linguam torrere palato Cœpit."

Far more beautiful, however, than the expressions of any of the ancient classics—more tender, more delicate, more full of pathos—is the description which the Christian poet Cowper gives of the arrow that pierces the side of the sinner. It is the account of his own conversion:

"I was a stricken deer that left the herd Long since. With many an arrow deep infix'd My panting side was charged, when I withdrew To seek a tranquil death in distant shades. There I was found by one, who had himself Been hurt by the archers. In his side he bore, And in his hands and feet, the cruel scars."

TASK, b. iii.

Of such wounding *he* did not complain. The arrow was extracted by the tender hand of him who alone had power to do it. Had Job known of him; had he been fully acquainted with the plan of mercy through him, and the comfort which a wounded sinner may find there, we should not have heard the bitter complaints which he uttered in his trials. Let us not judge him with the severity which we may use of one who is afflicted and complains under the full light of the gospel. ¶ *The terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.* Those things which God uses to excite terror. The word which is rendered "set in array" (תָּפַח), properly

5 Doth the wild ass bray <sup>1</sup> when he hath grass? or loweth the ox over his fodder?

<sup>1</sup> at grass.

denotes the drawing up of a line for battle; and the sense is here, that all these terrors seem to be drawn up in battle array, as if on purpose to destroy him. No expression could more strikingly describe the condition of an awakened sinner, though it is not certain that Job used it precisely in this sense. The idea as he used it is, that all that God commonly employed to produce alarm seemed to be drawn up as in a line of battle against him.

5. *Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass?* On the habits of the wild ass, see Notes on ch. xi. 12. The meaning of Job here is, that he did not complain without reason; and this he illustrates by the fact that the wild animal that had a plentiful supply of food would be gentle and calm, and that when its bray was heard, it was proof that it was suffering. So Job says that there was a reason for his complaining. He was suffering; and perhaps he means that his complaint was just as natural, and just as innocent, as the braying of the ass for its food. He *should* have remembered, however, that he was endowed with reason, and that he was bound to evince a different spirit from the brute creation. ¶ *Or loweth the ox over his fodder?* That is, the ox is satisfied and unmurmuring when his wants are supplied. The fact that he lows is proof that he is in distress, or there is a reason for it. So Job says that his complaints were proof that he was in distress, and that there was a reason for his language of complaint.

6. *Can that which is unsavoury.* Which is insipid, or without taste. ¶ *Be eaten without salt?* It is necessary to add salt in order to make it either palatable or wholesome. The *literal* truth of this no one can doubt. Insipid food cannot be relished, nor would it long sustain life. "The Orientals eat their bread often with mere salt, without any other addition except some dry and pounded summer-savoury, which last is the common

6 Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? or is there any taste in the white of an egg?

method at Aleppo." (Russell's Natural History of Aleppo, p. 27.) It should be remembered, also, that the bread of the Orientals is commonly mere unleavened cakes. See Rosenmüller, *Alte u. neue Morgenland*, on Gen. xviii. 6. The idea of Job in this adage or proverb is, that there was a fitness and propriety in things. Certain things went together, and were necessary companions. One cannot be expected without the other; one is incomplete without the other. Insipid food requires salt in order to make it palatable and nutritious, and so it is proper that suffering and lamentation should be united. There was a reason for his complaints, as there was for adding salt to unsavory food. Much perplexity, however, has been felt in regard to this whole passage, vs. 6, 7. Some have supposed that Job means to rebuke Eliphaz severely for his harangue on the necessity of patience, which he characterizes as insipid, impertinent, and disgusting to him; as being, in fact, as unpleasant to his soul as the white of an egg was to the taste. Dr. Good explains it as meaning, "Doth that which has nothing of seasoning, nothing of a pungent or irritating power within it, produce pungency or irritation? I too should be quiet and complain not, if I had nothing provocative or acrimonious; but alas! the food I am doomed to partake of is the very calamity which is most acute to my soul, that which I most loathe, and which is most grievous or trying to my palate." But the real sense of this first part of the verse is, I think, that which is expressed above—that insipid food requires proper condiment, and that in his sufferings there was a real ground for lamentation and complaint—as there was for making use of salt in that which is unsavory. I see no reason to think that he meant in this to reproach Eliphaz for an insipid and unmeaning address. ¶ *Or is there any taste in the white of an egg?* Critics and commentators have been greatly

7 The things *that* my soul refused to touch *are* as my sorrowful meat.

8 Oh that I might have my

divided about the meaning of this. The LXX render it, *εἰ δὲ καὶ ἐστὶ γεῦμα ἐν ῥήμασι κενούῃς*; *is there any taste in vain words?* Jerome (Vulg.), "can any one taste that which being tasted produces death?" The Targums render it substantially as it is in our version. The Hebrew word rendered "white" (רָךְ) means, properly, *spittle*, 1 Sam. xxi. 13. If applied to an egg, it means the white of it, as resembling spittle. The word rendered "egg" (בֶּרֶךְ) occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures. If it be regarded as derived from בָּרַךְ, *to sleep*, or *dream*, it may denote somnolency or dreams, and then fatuity, folly, or a foolish speech, as resembling dreams; and many have supposed that Job meant to characterize the speech of Eliphaz as of this description. The word may mean, as it does in Syriac, a species of herb, the "purslain" (*Gesenius*), proverbial for its insipidity among the Arabs, Greeks, and Romans, but which was used as a salad; and the whole phrase here *may* denote *purslain-broth*, and hence an insipid discourse. This is the interpretation of *Gesenius*; but the more common and more probable explanation is that of our common version, denoting the white of an egg. But what is the point of the remark as Job uses it? That it is a proverbial expression is apparent; but in what way Job meant to apply it, is not so clear. The Jews say that he meant to apply it to the speech of Eliphaz as being insipid and dull, without anything to penetrate the heart or to enliven the fancy; a speech as disagreeable to the mind as the white of an egg was insipid to the taste. Rosenmüller supposes that he refers to his afflictions, as being as unpleasant to bear as the white of an egg was to the taste. It seems to me that the sense of all the proverbs used here is about the same, and that they mean, "there is a reason for everything which occurs. The ass brays and the

request; and that God would grant *me*<sup>1</sup> the thing that I long for!

<sup>1</sup> *my expectation.*

ox lows only when destitute of food. That which is insipid is unpleasant, and the white of an egg is loathsome. So with my afflictions. They produce loathing and disgust. My very food (ver. 7) is disagreeable, and *everything* seems tasteless as the most insipid food would. Hence the language which I have used—language spoken not without reason, and expressive of this state of the soul."

7. *The things that my soul refused to touch.* That *I* refused to touch—the word *soul* here being used to denote himself. The idea here is, that those things which formerly were objects of loathing to him, had become his painful and distressing food. The idea may be either that he was reduced to the greatest pain and distress in partaking of his food, since he loathed that which he was obliged to eat (comp. Notes, ch. iii. 24), or more probably his calamity is described under the image of loathsome food, in accordance with the Oriental usage, by which one is said to *eat* or *taste* anything; i. e., to experience it. His sorrows were as sickening to him as the articles of food which he had mentioned were to the stomach. The LXX render it strangely, "For my wrath—*μὴν ἡ ὀργή*—cannot cease. For I see my food offensive as the smell of a lion"—*ὥσπερ ὀσμὴν λέοντος*.

8. *Oh that I might have my request.* To wit, death. This he desired as the end of his sorrows, either that he might be freed from them, or that he might be admitted to a happy world—or both. ¶ *Would grant me the thing that I long for.* Marg., *My expectation.* That is, death. He expected it; he looked out for it; he was impatient that the hour should come. This state of feeling is not uncommon—where sorrows become so accumulated and intense that a man desires to die. It is no evidence, however, of a preparation for death. The wicked are more frequently in this state than the righteous. They are over-

9 Even that <sup>c</sup> it would please God to destroy me; that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!

<sup>c</sup> 1 Kl. 19. 4. Jon. 4. 3, 8.

whelmed with pain; they see no hope of deliverance from it; and they impatiently wish that the end had come. They are stupid about the future world, and either suppose that the grave is the end of their being, or that in some undefinable way they will be made happy hereafter. The righteous, on the other hand, are willing to wait until God shall be pleased to release them, feeling that He has some good purpose in all that they endure, and that they do not suffer one pang too much. Such sometimes were Job's feelings; but here, as in some other instances, no one can doubt that he was betrayed into unjustifiable impatience under his sorrows, and that he expressed an improper wish to die.

9. *Even that it would please God to destroy me.* To put me to death, and to release me from my sorrows. Comp. ch. iii. 20, 21. The word rendered *destroy* here (אָפּוֹר) means, properly, to break in pieces, to crush, to trample under foot, to make small by bruising. Here the sense is, that Job wished that God would *crush* him, so as to take his life. The LXX render it *wound*—*ῥωσάτω*. The Chaldee renders it, "Let God, who has begun to make me poor, loose his hand and make me rich." ¶ *That he would let loose his hand.* Job here represents the hand of God as bound or confined. He wishes that that fettered hand were released, and were so free in his afflictions that he might be permitted to die. ¶ *And cut me off!* This expression, says Gesenius (*Lex.* in the word אָפּוֹר), is a metaphor derived from a weaver, who, when his web is finished, cuts it off from the thum by which it is fastened to the loom. See Notes on Isa. xxxviii. 12. The sense is, that Job wished that God would wholly finish his work, and that as he had begun to destroy him, he would complete it.

10 Then should I yet have comfort; yea, I would harden myself in sorrow: let him not spare; for <sup>d</sup> I have not concealed the words of the Holy <sup>c</sup> One.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. 40. 9. Ac. 20. 20, 27. <sup>c</sup> Is. 57. 15.

10. *Then should I yet have comfort.* Dr. Good renders this, "then would I already take comfort." Noyes, "yet it should still be my consolation." The literal sense is, "and there would be to me yet consolation;" or "my consolation would yet be." That is, he would find comfort in the grave (comp. ch. iii. 13, seq.), or in the future world. ¶ *I would harden myself in sorrow.* Dr. Good renders this, "and I will leap for joy." In a similar way Noyes renders it, "I would exult." So Schultens understands the expression. The Hebrew word rendered "I would harden myself" (יִצְחַק) occurs nowhere else, and expositors have been divided in regard to its meaning. According to Castell, it means, to strengthen, to confirm. The Chaldee יִצְחָק means, to grow warm, to glow, to burn. The Arabic *صَلد* is applied to a horse, and means, to beat the earth with his feet, and then, to leap, to exult, to spring up; and this is the idea which Gesenius and others suppose is to be retained here—an idea which certainly better suits the connexion than the common one of hardening himself in sorrow. The LXX render it *ἁλλόμεν*—"I would leap," or exult, although they have sadly missed the sense in the other part of the verse. They render it, "Let but my city be a grave, upon whose walls I will leap; I will not spare, for I have not falsified the holy words of my God." The Chaldee renders it, "and I will (יִצְחַק) exult when fury comes upon the wicked." The probable meaning is, that Job would exult, or rejoice, if he was permitted to die; he would triumph even in the midst of his sorrow, if he might lie down and expire. ¶ *Let him not spare.* Let him not withhold or restrain those sufferings which would sink me down to the grave. ¶ *For I have not*

11 What is my strength, that I should hope? and what is mine end, that I should prolong my life?

*concealed the words of the Holy One.* I have openly and boldly maintained a profession of attachment to the cause of God, and to his truth. I have, in a public and solemn manner, professed attachment to my Maker; I have not refused to acknowledge that I am his; I have not been ashamed of him and his cause. How much consolation may be found in such a reflection when we come to die! If there has been a consistent profession of religion; if there has been no shrinking back from attachment to God; if in all circles, high and low, rich and poor, gay and serious, there has been an unwavering and steady, though not ostentatious, attachment to the cause of God, it will give unspeakable consolation and confidence when we come to die. If there has been concealment, and shame, and shrinking back from a profession of religion, there will be shame, and regret, and sorrow. Comp. Ps. xl. 9; Acts, xx. 20—27.

11. *What is my strength, that I should hope?* Job had hitherto borne his trials without apprehension that he would lose his constancy of hope, or his confidence in God. He here seems to apprehend that his constancy might fail, and he therefore wishes to die before he should be left to dishonor God. He asks, therefore, what strength he had that he should hope to be able to sustain his trials much longer. ¶ *And what is mine end, that I should prolong my life?* Various interpretations have been given of this passage. Some suppose it means, "What is the limit of my strength? How long will it last?" Others, "What end is there to be to my miseries?" Others, "How distant is mine end? How long have I to live?" Noyes renders it, "And what is mine end, that I should be patient?" Rosenmüller supposes that the word "end" here means the "end of his strength," or that he had not such fortitude as to be certain that he could long bear his trials without

12 *Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh<sup>1</sup> of brass?*

<sup>1</sup> brazen.

complaining or murmuring. The phrase rendered "prolong my life," probably means, rather, "to lengthen the patience, or to hold out under accumulated sorrows." The word rendered life (חַיָּה) often means, soul, spirit, mind, as well as life, and the sense is, that he not hope, from any strength that he had, to bear without murmuring these trials until the natural termination of his life; and hence he wished God to grant his request, and to destroy him. Feeling that his patience was sinking under his calamities, he says that it would be better for him to die than be left to dishonor his Maker. It is just the state of feeling which many a sufferer has, that his trials are so great that nature will sink under them, and that death would be a relief. *Then* is the time to look to God for support and consolation.

12. *Is my strength the strength of stones?* That is, like a rampart or fortification made of stones, or like a craggy rock, that can endure assaults made upon it. A rock will bear the beatings of the tempest, and resist the floods, but how can frail man do it? The idea of Job is, that he had no strength to bear up against these accumulated trials; that he was afraid that he should be left to sink under them, and to complain of God; and that his friends were not to wonder if his strength gave way, and he uttered the language of complaint. ¶ *Or is my flesh of brass?* Marg., brazen. The comparison here used is not uncommon. So Cicero, Aca. Qu. iv. 31, says, Non enim est e saxo sculptus, aut e robore dolatus homo; habet corpus, habet animum; movetur mente, movetur sensibus:—"for man is not chiselled out of the rock, nor cut from a tree; he has a body, he has a soul; he is actuated by mind, he is swayed by senses." So Theocritus, in his description of Amycus, Idyll. xxii. 47:

Στήθεα δ' ἐσφαίρωτο πελώρια, καὶ πλατὺ ὤμων  
Σαρὶ σιδεραῖη, σφυρήλατος οὐα κολοσσός.

13 *Is not my help in me? and is wisdom driven quite from me?*

14 *To him that <sup>1</sup> is afflicted <sup>f</sup> pity should be shewed from his*

<sup>1</sup> *melteeth.*

*f* He. 13. 3.

"Round as to his vast breast and broad back, and with iron flesh, he is as if a colossus formed with a hammer." So in Homer the expression frequently occurs—*σιδήριον ἦτορ*—*an iron heart*—to denote courage. And so, according to Schultens, it has come to be a proverb, *οὐκ ἀπὸ ὀρυός, οὐκ ἀπὸ πέτρης*—*not from a tree, not from a rock*. The meaning of Job is plain. He had flesh like others. His muscles, and nerves, and sinews, could not bear a constant force applied to them, as if they were made of brass or iron. They *must* give way; and he apprehended that he would sink under these sorrows, and be left to use language that might dishonor God. At all events, he felt that these great sorrows justified the strong expressions which he had already employed.

13. *Is not my help in me?* This would be better rendered in an affirmative manner, or as an exclamation. The interrogative form of the previous verses need not be continued in this. The sense is, "alas! there is no help in me!" That is, "I have no strength; I must give up under these sorrows in despair." So it is rendered by Jerome, Rosenmüller, Good, Noyes, and others. ¶ *And is wisdom driven quite from me?* This also should be read as an affirmation, "deliverance is driven from me." The word rendered *wisdom* (חָכְמָה) means, properly, a setting upright; then, help, deliverance; and then, purpose, enterprise. See Notes on ch. v. 12. Here it means that all hope of deliverance had fled, and that he was sinking in despair.

14. *To him that is afflicted.* Marg., *melteeth*. The word here used (צָפַ) is from צָפַ, *másds*, to melt, flow down, waste away, and here means, one who pines away, or is consumed under calamities. The design of this verse is, to reprove his friends for the little sympathy which they had shown for him.

friend; but he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.

15 *My brethren <sup>c</sup> have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the*

*g* Ps. 38. 11.

He had looked for consolation in his trials, and he had a right to expect it; but he says that he had met with just the opposite, and that his calamity was aggravated by the fact that they had dealt only in the language of severity. ¶ *Pity should be shewed from his friend.* Good renders this, "shame to the man who despiseth his friend." A great variety of interpretations have been proposed of the passage, but our translation has probably expressed the true sense. If there is any place where kindness should be shown, it is when a man is sinking under accumulated sorrows to the grave. ¶ *But he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.* This may be either understood as referring to the language which Job says they had used of him—charging him with forsaking the fear of God, instead of consoling him; or it may mean, that they had forsaken the fear of God in reproaching him, and in failing to comfort him; or it may mean, that if such kindness were not shown to a friend in trial, he would be left to cast off the fear of God. This last interpretation is adopted by Noyes. Good supposes that it is designed to be a severe reproach of Eliphaz, for the course which he had pursued. It seems to me that this is probably the correct interpretation, and that the particle <sup>1</sup> here is used in an adversative sense, meaning, that while it was an obvious dictate of piety to show kindness to a friend, Eliphaz had forgotten this obligation, and had indulged himself in a strain of remark which could not have been prompted by true religion. This sentiment he proceeds to illustrate by one of the most beautiful comparisons to be found in any language.

15. *My brethren.* To wit, the three friends who had come to condole with him. He uses the language of *brethren*, to intimate what he had a right to expect from them. It is common in all languages to give the name *brethren* to

stream of brooks they pass away ;  
16 Which are blackish by rea-

son of the ice, *and* wherein the  
snow is hid:

friends. ¶ *Have dealt deceitfully.* That is, I have been sadly disappointed. I looked for the language of condolence and compassion; for something to cheer my heart, and to uphold me in my trials—as weary and thirsty travellers look for water, and are sadly disappointed when they come to the place where they expected to find it, and find the stream dried up. The simile here used is exquisitely beautiful, considered as a mere description of an actual occurrence in the deserts of Arabia. But its chief beauty consists in its exact adaptation to the case before him, and the point and pith of the reproof which it administers. “The fulness, strength, and noise of these temporary streams in winter answer to the large professions made to Job in his prosperity by his friends. The dryness of the waters at the approach of summer resembles the failure of their friendship in time of affliction.” Scott, as quoted by Noyes. ¶ *As a brook.* That is, as a stream that is swelled by winter torrents, and that is dry in summer. Such streams abound in Arabia, and in the East generally. The torrents pour down from the hills in time of rain, or when swelled by the melting of the ice; but in summer they are dry, or their waters are lost in the sand. Even large streams are thus absorbed. The river Barrady, which waters Damascus, after passing to a short distance to the south-east of the city towards the Arabian deserts, is lost in the sand, or evaporated by the heat of the sun. The idea here is, that travellers in a caravan would approach the place where water had been found before, but would find the fountain dried up, or the stream lost in the sand; and when they looked for refreshment, they found only disappointment. In Arabia, there are not many rivers. In Yemen, indeed, there are a few streams that flow the year round, and on the East the Euphrates has been claimed as belonging to Arabia. But most of the streams are winter torrents, that become dry in summer, or rivalets, that are swelled by

heavy rains. An illustration of the verse before us occurs in Campbell’s Travels in Africa. “In desert parts of Africa it has afforded much joy to fall in with a brook of water, especially when running in the direction of the journey, expecting it would prove a valuable companion. Perhaps before it accompanied us two miles, it became invisible by sinking into the sand; but two miles farther along, it would reappear and raise hopes of its continuance; but after running a few hundred yards would sink finally into the sand, no more again to rise.” A comparison of a man who deceives and disappoints one to such a stream is common in Arabia, and has given rise, according to Schultens, to many proverbs. Thus they say of a treacherous friend, “I put no trust in thy torrent;” and, “O torrent, thy flowing subsides.” So the Scholiast on Moallakat says, “a pool or flood was called Gadyr, because travellers when they pass by it find it full of water, but when they return, they find nothing there, and it seems to have treacherously betrayed them. So they say of a false man, that he is more deceitful than the appearance of water”—referring, perhaps, to the deceitful appearance of the *mirage* in the sands of the desert. See Notes on Isa. xxxv. 7. ¶ *And as the stream of brooks they pass away.* As the valley stream—the stream that runs along in the valley, that is filled by the mountain torrent. They pass away on the return of summer, or when the rain ceases to fall, and the valley is again dry. So with the consolations of false friends. They cannot be depended on. All their professions are temporary and evanescent.

16. *Which are blackish.* Or, rather, which are *turbid*. The word here used (טַרְבִּי) means, to be turbid, foul, or muddy, spoken of a torrent, and then, to be of a dusky color, to be dark colored, as, e. g., the skin scorched by the sun, Job, xxx. 28; or to be dark—as when the sun is obscured. Joel, ii. 10, iv. 13. Jerome renders it, *Qui timent pruina—*

17 What time they wax warm, they <sup>1</sup> vanish: <sup>2</sup> when it is hot, they are <sup>3</sup> consumed out of their

<sup>1</sup> are cut off. <sup>2</sup> in the heat thereof.  
<sup>3</sup> extinguished.

"which fear the frost, when the snow comes upon them." The LXX render it, "they who had venerated me now rushed upon me like snow or hoar-frost, which melting at the approach of heat, it was not known whence it was." The expression in the Hebrew means, that they were rendered dark and turbid by the accumulated torrents caused by the dissolving snow and ice. ¶ *By reason of the ice.* When it melts and swells the streams. ¶ *And wherein the snow is hid.* That is, says Noyes, melts and flows into them. It refers to the melting of the snow in the spring, when the streams are swelled as a consequence of it. Snow, by melting in the spring and summer, would swell the streams, which at other times were dry. Lucretius mentions the melting of the snows on the mountains of Ethiopia, as one of the causes of the overflowing of the Nile:

"Forsitan Ethiopum penitus de montibus altis  
Crescat, ubi in campos albas descendere nin-  
gues

Tabificis subigit radiis sol, omnia lustrans."

VI. 734.

"Or, from the Ethiop-mountains, the bright sun,  
Now full-matured, with deep-dissolving ray,  
May melt the agglomerate snows, and down  
the plains

Drive them, augmenting hence the incipient  
stream." Good.

A similar description occurs in Homer,  
II. xi. 492:

'Ως δ' ὅποτε πλήθων ποταμός πεδιονδε κάτεισι  
Χειμαίρους κατ' ὄρεσφιν, κ.τ.λ.

And in Ovid also, Fast. ii. 219:

"Ecco velut torrens, undis pluvialibus auctus,  
Aut nive, quæ, Zephyro victa repente fluit,  
Per sata perque vias fertur; nec, ut ante so-  
lebat,  
Riparum clausas margine finit aquas."

17. *What time.* In the time, or after a time. ¶ *They wax warm.* Gesenius renders this word (צָרָרָה), *when they became narrow*, and this version has been adopted by Noyes. The word occurs nowhere else. Taylor (Concord.) renders it, "to be dissolved by the heat of

place.

18 The paths of their way are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish.

the sun." Jerome, *fuerint dissipati*—"in the time in which they are scattered." The LXX, *τακίσα θίμης γενομένης*—"melting at the approach of heat." The Chaldee, "In the time in which the generation of the deluge sinned, they were scattered." Castell says that the word צָרָרָה in Pihel, as the word in Chaldee (צָרָרָה), means, to flow; and also that it has the same signification as צָרָרָה *tzárābh*, to become warm.

In Syriac, the word ܥܕܝܐ means, to be straitened, bound, confined. On the whole, however, the connexion seems to require us to understand it as it is rendered in our common translation, as meaning, that when they are exposed to the rays of a burning sun, they evaporate. They pour down from the mountains in torrents, but when they flow into burning sands, or become exposed to the intense action of the sun, they are dried up, and disappear. ¶ *They vanish.* Marg., *are cut off*. That is, they wander off into the sands of the desert until they are finally lost. ¶ *When it is hot.* Marg., *in the heat thereof*. When the summer comes, or when the rays of the sun are poured down upon them. *They are consumed.* Marg., *extinguished*. They are dried up, and furnish no water for the caravan.

18. *The paths of their way are turned aside.* Noyes renders this, "The caravans turn aside to them on their way." Good, "The outlets of their channel wind about." Rosenmüller, "The bands of travellers direct their journey to them." Jerome, "Involved are the paths of their steps." According to the interpretation of Rosenmüller, Noyes, Umbreit, and others, it means, that the caravans on their journey turn aside from their regular way, in order to find water there; and that in doing it, they go up into a desert and perish. According to the other interpretation, it means, that the channels of the stream wind



19 The troops of Tema<sup>h</sup> looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them.

20 They were confounded be-

<sup>h</sup> Ge. 25. 15.

along until they diminish and come to nothing. This latter I take to be the true sense of the passage, as it is undoubtedly the most poetical. It is a representation of the stream winding along in its channels, or making new channels as it flows from the mountain, until it diminishes by evaporation, and finally comes to nothing. ¶ *They go to nothing.* Noyes renders this very singularly, "into the desert,"—meaning, that the caravans, when they suppose they are going to a place of refreshment, actually go to a desert, and thus perish. The word used here, however (דָּבַח), does not occur in the sense of a desert elsewhere in the Scriptures. It denotes nothingness, emptiness, vanity (see Gen. i. 2), and very appropriately expresses the *nothingness* into which a stream vanishes when it is dried up or lost in the sand. The sense is, that those streams wander along until they become smaller and smaller, and then wholly disappear. They deceive the traveller, who hoped to find refreshment there. Streams depending on snows and storms, and having no permanent fountains, cannot be confided in. Pretended friends are like them. In times of prosperity, they are full of professions, and their aid is proffered to us. But we go to them when we need their assistance, when we are like the weary and thirsty traveller, and they disappear like deceitful streams in the sands of the desert.

19. *The troops of Tema looked.* That is, looked for the streams of water. On the situation of *Tema*, see Notes, ch. ii. 11. This was the country of Eliphaz, and the image would be well understood by him. The figure is one of exquisite beauty. It means, that the caravans from Tema, in journeying through the desert, looked for those streams. They

came they had hoped; they came thither, and were ashamed.

21 For now<sup>1</sup> ye are<sup>2</sup> nothing; ye see *my* casting down, and are afraid.

<sup>1</sup> or, ye are like to it, or, them.

<sup>2</sup> not.

came with an expectation of finding the means of allaying their thirst. When they came there, they were disappointed, for the waters had disappeared. Reiske, however, renders this, "Their tracks (the branchings of the flood) tend towards Tema;"—a translation which the Hebrew will bear, but the usual version is more correct and is more elegant. ¶ *The companies of Sheba waited for them.* The Sheba here referred to was probably in the southern part of Arabia. See Notes on Isa. xlv. 14. The idea is, that the caravans from that part of Arabia came and looked for a supply of water, and were disappointed.

20. *They were confounded because they had hoped.* The caravans of Tema and Sheba. The word "confounded" here means ashamed. It represents the state of feeling which one has who has met with disappointment. He is perplexed, distressed, and ashamed that he had entertained so confident hope. See Notes on Isa. xxx. 5. They were downcast and sad that the waters had failed, and they looked on one another with confusion and dismay. There are few images more poetic than this, and nothing that would more strikingly exhibit the disappointment of Job, that he had looked for consolation from his friends, and had not found it. He was downcast, distressed, and disheartened, like the travellers of Tema and of Sheba, because they had nothing to offer to console him; because he had waited for them to sustain him in his afflictions, and had been wholly disappointed.

21. *For now ye are nothing.* Marg., "or, Ye are like to it, or them." In the margin also the word *nothing* is rendered *not*. This variety arises from a difference of reading in the Hebrew text, many MSS. having, instead of *נִשְׁבַּח*, *not*,

22 Did I say, Bring unto me? or, Give a reward for me of your substance?

23 Or, Deliver me from the enemy's hand? or, Redeem me from the hand of the mighty?

וְ, to him, or to it. Which is correct it is not easy to determine. Rosenmüller supposes that it is only a variety in writing the word נָ, where the ו is often used for נ. The probability is, that it means, that they were *as nothing*—like the stream that had disappeared. This is the point of the comparison; and this Job now applies to his friends. They had promised much by their coming—like the streams, when swollen by rains and melted ice. But now they were found to be nothing. ¶ Ye see my casting down. נָפַל—my being broken or crushed; my calamity. Vulg. *plagam*. LXX, τραῦμα, wound. ¶ And are afraid. Are timid and fearful. You shrink back; you dare not approach the subject boldly, or come to me with words of consolation. You came with a professed intention to administer comfort, but your courage fails.

22. Did I say, Bring unto me? Job proceeds to state that their conduct in this had been greatly aggravated by the fact that they had come *voluntarily*. He had not asked them to come. He had desired no gift; no favor. He had not applied to them in any way or form for help. They had come of their own accord, and when they came, they uttered only the language of severity and reproach. If he had asked them to aid him, the case would have been different. That would have given them some excuse for interposing in the case. But now the whole was gratuitous and unasked. He did not desire their interference, and he implies by these remarks that if they could say nothing that would console him, it would have been kindness in them to have said nothing. ¶ Or, Give a reward for me of your substance? That is, did I ask a present from you

24 Teach me, and I will hold my tongue; and cause me to understand wherein I have erred.

25 How forcible<sup>1</sup> are right words! but what doth your arguing reprove?

<sup>1</sup> Ec. 12. 11.

out of your property? I asked nothing. I have on no occasion asked you to interpose and aid me.

23. Or, Deliver me from the enemy's hand? At no time have I called on you to rescue me from a foe. ¶ Or, Redeem me? That is, rescue me from the hand of robbers. The meaning is, that he was in no way beholden to them; he had never called on them for assistance; and there was therefore no *claim* which they could now have to afflict him farther by their reflections. There seems to be something peevish in these remarks; and we need not attempt to justify the spirit which dictated them.

24. Teach me, and I will hold my tongue. That is, give me any real instruction, or show me what is my duty, and I will be silent. By this, he means that Eliphaz had really imparted no instruction, but had dealt only in the language of reproof. The sense is, "I would willingly sit and listen where truth is imparted, and where I could be enabled to see the reason of the divine dealings. If I could be made to *understand* where I have erred, I would acquiesce."

25. How forcible are right words! How weighty and impressive are words of truth! Job means that he was accustomed to feel their power, and to admit it on his soul. If their words were such, he would listen to them with profound attention, and in silence. The expression has a proverbial cast. ¶ But what doth your arguing reprove? Or rather, what doth the reproof from you reprove? or, what do your reproaches prove? Job professes a readiness to listen to words of truth and wisdom; he complains that the language of reproach used by them was not adapted to instruct his understanding or to benefit his heart.

26 Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the speeches of one that is desperate, *which* are as wind?

As it was, he did not feel himself convinced, and was likely to derive no advantage from what they said.

26. *Do ye imagine to reprove words?* A considerable variety of interpretation has occurred in regard to this verse. Dr. Good, following Schultens, supposes that the word translated *wind* here (רֵיחַ) means, sighs, or groans, and renders it,

Would ye then take up words for reproof?  
The mere venting the moans of despair?

But Rosenmüller has well remarked that the word never has this signification. Noyes renders it,

Do ye mean to censure words?  
The words of a man in despair are but wind.

In this he has probably expressed the true sense. This explanation was proposed by Ludov. de Dieu, and is adopted by Rosenmüller. According to this, the sense is, "Do you think it reasonable to carp at mere words? Will you pass over weighty and important arguments and facts, and dwell upon the words merely that are extorted from a man in misery? Do you not know that one in a state of despair utters many expressions which ought not to be regarded as the result of his deliberate judgment? And will you spend your time in dwelling on those words rather than on the main argument involved?" This is probably the true sense of the verse; and if so, it is a complaint of Job that they were disposed to make him "an offender for a word," rather than to enter into the real merits of the case, and especially that they were not disposed to make allowances for the hasty expressions of a man almost in despair.

27. *Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherless.* Job undoubtedly means that this should be applied to himself. He complains that they took advantage of his words, that they were disposed to pervert his meaning, and unkindly distorted what he said. The word rendered "father-

27 Yea, ye <sup>1</sup> overwhelm the fatherless, and ye dig a pit for your friend.

<sup>1</sup> cause to fall upon.

less" (יָתֵם) properly denotes an orphan, Ex. xxii. 23; Deut. x. 18; xiv. 29. But it is possible that it is not to be taken in this limited signification here. The word is still retained in the Arabic language,—the language spoken in the country where Job lived,—where the word يَتَامَ *yatham*, means, to be

lonely, bereaved, &c. It may be this idea occurs under the form of the word used here, that Job was lonely and bereaved; that he was as desolate and helpless as a fatherless child; and especially that they manifested a spirit like that of those who would oppress an orphan. The word "overwhelm" (רָחַץ) means, properly, "ye fall upon;" that is, you deal with him violently. Or, it may mean here, in the Hiphil, "you cause to fall upon," referring to a net, and meaning, that they sprung a net for the orphan. So Rosenmüller and Noyes understand it. To do this was, in Oriental countries, regarded as a crime of peculiar enormity, and is often so spoken of in the Bible. See Notes on Isa. i. 17. ¶ *And ye dig a pit for your friend.* You act towards your friend as hunters do towards wild beasts. They dig a pit and cover it over with brushwood to conceal it, and the hunted animal, deceived, falls into it unawares. So you endeavour to entrap your friend. You lay a plan for it. You conceal your design. You contrive to drive him into the pit that you have made, and urge him on till you have caught him in the use of unguarded language, or driven him to vent expressions that cover him with confusion. Instead of throwing a mantle of charity over his frailties and infirmities, you make the most of every word, take it out of its proper connexion, and attempt to overwhelm him in shame and disgrace. On the method of hunting in ancient times, see Notes on ch. xviii. 8—10.

28 Now therefore be content, look upon me; for *it is*<sup>1</sup> evident unto you if I lie.

29 Return, I pray you, let it

<sup>1</sup> before your face.

28. *Now therefore be content.* Rosenmüller has better rendered this, "if it please you." The sense is, "if you are willing, look upon me." That is, "if you are disposed, you may take a careful view of me. Look me in the countenance. You can see for yourselves whether I am sincere or false. I am willing that my whole demeanor should be subjected to the utmost scrutiny."

¶ *For it is evident unto you if I lie.* Marg., as in Heb., *before your face.* That is, "you yourselves can see by my whole demeanor, by my sufferings, my patience, my manifest sincerity, that I am not playing the hypocrite." Conscious of sincerity, he believed that if they would look upon him they would be convinced that he was a sincere and an upright man.

29. *Return, I pray you.* That is, return to the argument. Give your attention to it again. Perhaps he may have discerned a disposition in them to turn away from what he was saying, and to withdraw and leave him. Job expresses his belief that he could convince them; and he proposes more fully to state his views, if they would attend to him. ¶ *Let it not be iniquity.* Let it not be considered as wrong thus to come back to the argument. Or, let it not be assumed that my sentiments are erroneous, and my heart evil. Job means, that it should not be taken for granted that he was a hypocrite; that he was conscious of sincerity, and that he was convinced that he could satisfy them of it if they would lend a listening ear. A similar sentiment he expresses in ch. xix. 28:

But ye should say, Why persecute we him?  
Seeing the root of the matter is found in me.

not be iniquity; yea, return again, my righteousness is in<sup>2</sup> it.

30 Is there iniquity in my tongue? cannot my<sup>3</sup> taste discern perverse things?

<sup>2</sup> i. e., *this matter.*

<sup>3</sup> palate.

¶ *My righteousness is in it.* Marg., i. e., *this matter.* The sense is, "my complete vindication is in the argument which I propose to state. I am prepared to show that I am innocent." On that account, he wishes them to return and attend to what he proposed to say.

30. *Is there iniquity in my tongue?* This is a solemn appeal to their consciences, and their own deep conviction that he was sincere. Iniquity in the tongue means falsehood, deceit, hypocrisy—that which would be expressed by the tongue. ¶ *Cannot my taste discern perverse things?* Marg., *palate.*

The word used here (תן) means, properly, the palate, together with the corresponding lower part of the mouth, the *inside mouth*.—Gesenius. Hence it means the organ of taste, residing in the mouth. The meaning is, that Job was qualified to discern what was true or false, sincere or hypocritical, just or unjust, in the same manner as the palate is fitted to discern the qualities of objects, whether bitter or sweet, pleasant or unpleasant, wholesome or unwholesome. His object is to invite attention to what he had to state on the subject. To this proposed vindication he proceeds in the following chapter, showing the greatness of his calamity, and his right, as he supposes, to complain. Their attention was gained. They did not refuse to listen to him, and he proceeds to a fuller statement of his calamity, and of the reasons why he had allowed himself to use the language of complaint. They listened without interruption till he was done, and then replied in tones of deeper severity still.

## CHAPTER VII.

*IS there not*<sup>1</sup> *an appointed*<sup>2</sup> *time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling?*

<sup>1</sup> or, *warfare*.

a c. 14. 5, 14.

1. Is there *not an appointed time to man upon earth?* Marg., or, *warfare*. The word here used (מִצְוָה) means, properly, a host, an army; see Notes, Isa. i. 9; then it means, *warfare*, or the hard service of a soldier. Notes, Isa. xl. 2. Here it means, that man on the earth was *enlisted*, so to speak, for a certain time. He had a certain and definite hard service to perform, and which he must continue to discharge until he was relieved by death. It was a service of hazard, like the life of a soldier, or of toil, like that of one who had been hired for a certain time, and who anxiously looked for the period of his release. The object of Job in introducing this remark evidently is, to vindicate himself for the wish to die which he had expressed. He maintains that it is as natural and proper for man in his circumstances to wish to be released by death, as for a soldier to desire that his term of service might be accomplished, or a weary servant to long for the shades of the evening. The LXX render it, "Is not the life of man upon the earth *παραθήριον*,"—explained by Schleusner, and rendered by Good, as meaning, *a band of pirates*. The Vulgate renders it, *militia—military service*. The sense is, that the life of man was like the hard service of a soldier; and this is one of the points of justification to which Job referred in ch. vi. 29, 30. He maintains that it is not improper to desire that such a service should close. ¶ *The days of an hireling?* A man who has been hired to perform some service with a promise of a reward, and who is not unnaturally impatient to receive it. Job maintained that such was the life of man. He was looking forward to a re-

2 As a servant<sup>2</sup> earnestly desireth the shadow, and as an hireling looketh for *the reward of his work* :

<sup>2</sup> *gapeth after*.

ward, and it was not unnatural or improper to desire that that reward should be given to him.

2. *As a servant earnestly desireth.* Marg., *gapeth after*. The word here (רָפָף) means, to breathe hard, to pant, to blow, and then, to desire earnestly. ¶ *The shadow*. This may refer either to a shade in the intense heat of the day, or to the night. Nothing is more grateful in oriental countries, when the sun pours down intensely on burning sands, than the shadow of a tree, or the shade of a projecting rock. The editor of the Pictorial Bible on this verse remarks, "We think we can say that, next to water, the greatest and deepest enjoyment we could ever realize in the hot climates of the East was, when on a journey, any circumstance of the road brought us for a few minutes under some shade. Its reviving influence upon the bodily frame, and consequently upon the spirits, is inconceivable by one who has not had some experience of the kind. Often also, during the halt of a caravan in the open air, when the writer has been enabled to secure a station for repose under the shelter of a rock or of an old wall, has his own exultation and strong sense of luxurious enjoyment reminded him of this and other passages of Scripture, in which shade is mentioned as a thing panted for with intense desire." Probably here, however, the reference is to the shades of night, the time when darkness falls upon the earth, and the servant is released from his toil. It is common in all languages to speak of night as enveloped with shadows. Thus Virgil, *Æn.* iv. 7: "Humentemque aurora polo dimoverat umbram."

3 So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights<sup>b</sup> are appointed to me.

4 When<sup>c</sup> I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the<sup>1</sup> night

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 6. 6.

<sup>c</sup> De. 28. 67.

<sup>1</sup> evening be measured.

The meaning of Job is, that as a servant looked impatiently for the shades of the evening, when he would be dismissed from toil, so he longed for death. ¶ *And as an hireling looketh.* That is, he anxiously desires his work to be finished, and expects the reward of his labors. So Job looked to the reward of a life of toil and piety. Is there not here an undoubted reference to a future state? Is it not manifest that Job looked to some recompence in the future world, as real and as sure, as a hired servant looks for the reward of his toils when his work is done?

3. *So am I made to possess.* Heb. I am made to inherit. The meaning is, that such sad and melancholy seasons now were his only portion. ¶ *Months of vanity.* That is, months which were destitute of comfort; in other words, months of affliction. How long his trials had continued before this, we have no means of ascertaining. There is no reason, however, to suppose that his bodily sufferings came upon him all at once, or that they had not continued for a considerable period. It is quite probable that his expressions of impatience were the result, not only of the *intensity*, but the *continuance*, of his sorrows. ¶ *And wearisome nights are appointed to me.* Even his rest was disturbed. The time when care is usually forgotten and toil ceases, was to him a period of sleepless anxiety and distress—עָקַל. The LXX render it, *nights of pangs* (νύκτες ὀδυνην), expressing accurately the sense of the Hebrew. The Hebrew word עָקַל is commonly applied to intense sorrow, to trouble and pain of the severest kind, such as the pains of parturition. See Notes on Isa. liii. 11.

4. *When I lie down.* I find no comfort and no rest on my bed. My nights are long, and I am impatient to have

be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day.

5 My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and become loathsome.

them passed; and equally so is it with the day. This is a description which all can understand who have been laid on a bed of pain. ¶ *And the night be gone?* Marg., *evening be measured.* Herder renders this, "the night is irksome to me." The word rendered night (לַיְלָה) properly means, the early part of the night, until it is succeeded by the dawn. Thus, in Gen. i. 5, "And the evening (עֶרֶב) and the morning were the first day." Here it means the portion of the night which is before the dawning of the aurora—the night. The word rendered "be gone," and in the margin, "be measured" (מִדָּוָה), has been variously rendered. The verb מָדָה means, to stretch, to extend, to measure; and, according to Gesenius, the form of the word here used is a noun meaning *flight*, and the sense is, "when shall be the flight of the night?" He derives it from מָדָה, to move, to flee, to flee away. So Rosenmüller explains it. The expression is poetic, meaning, when shall the night be gone? ¶ *I am full of tossings to and fro* (מִדָּוָה). A word from the same root. It means, uneasy motions, restlessness. He found no quiet repose on his bed. ¶ *Unto the dawning.* מֵעַרְבָּה, from עָרַב, to breathe; hence the evening twilight, because the breezes blow, or seem to breathe, and then it means, also, the morning twilight, the dawn. Dr. Stock renders it, "till the morning breeze."

5. *My flesh is clothed with worms.* Job here undoubtedly refers to his diseased state; and this is one of the passages by which we may learn the nature of his complaint. Comp. Notes on ch. ii. 7. There is reference here to the worms which are produced in ulcers and in other forms of disease. Michaelis

## 6 My days are swifter than a

remarks that such effects are produced often in the elephantiasis. Bochart, Hieroz. P. II., Lib. IV., c. xxvi., pp. 619—621, has abundantly proved that such effects occur in disease, and has mentioned several instances where death ensued from this cause. Comp. Acts xii. 23. The same thing would often happen—and particularly in hot climates—if it were not for the closest care and attention in keeping running sores as clean as possible. ¶ *And clods of dust.* Accumulated on the ulcers which covered his whole body. This effect would be almost unavoidable. Dr. Good renders this, “worms, and the imprisoning dust,” and supposes that the image is taken from the grave, and that the idea in the whole passage is that of one who is “dead while he lives,”—that is, of one who is undergoing putrefaction before he is buried. But the more common and correct interpretation is that which refers it to the accumulated filth attending a loathsome disease. See ch. ii. 8. The word which is here used and rendered *clods* (כִּוּ), means, a lump of earth or dust. Sept., βώλακας γῆς; Vulg., *sordibus pulveris*, “clods of earth.” The whole verse is rendered by the LXX, “My body swarms with the putrefaction of worms, and I moisten the clods of earth with the ichor (ἰχώρος) of ulcers.” ¶ *My skin is broken*—שָׁרִי. This word means, to make afraid, to terrify; and then to shrink together from fear, or to contract. Here it means, according to Gesenius, that “the skin came together and healed, and then broke forth again and ran with pus.” Jerome renders it, *aruit—dries up*. Herder, “my skin becometh closed.” Dr. Good, “my skin becometh stiff;” and carries out his idea that the reference here is to the stiffened and rigid appearance of the body after death. Doederlin supposes that it refers to the rough and horrid appearance of the skin in the elephantiasis, when it becomes rigid and frightful by the disease. Jarchi renders it, *cutis mea corrugata—my skin is rough,*

weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope.

or filled with wrinkles. This seems to me to be the idea, that it was filled with wrinkles and corrugations; that it became stiff, fixed, frightful, and was such as to excite terror in the beholder. ¶ *And become loathsome.* Gesenius, “runs again with pus.” The word here used (כִּוּ) means, properly, to reject, contempt, despise. A second sense which it has is, to melt, to run like water. Ps. lviii. 7, “Let them melt away (כִּוּ) as waters.” But the usual meaning is to be preferred here. His skin became abhorrent and loathsome in the sight of others.

6. *My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle.* That is, they are short and few. He does not here refer so much to the *rapidity* with which they were passing away as to the fact that they would soon be gone, and that he was likely to be cut off without being permitted to enjoy the blessings of a long life. Comp. Notes on Isa. xxxviii. 12. The weaver's shuttle is the instrument by which the weaver inserts the filling in the woof. With us few things would furnish a more striking emblem of rapidity than the speed with which a weaver throws his shuttle from one side of the web to the other. It would seem that such was the fact among the ancients, though the precise manner in which they wove their cloth is unknown. It was common to compare life with a web, which was filled up by the successive days. The ancient classic writers spoke of it as a web woven by the Fates. We can all feel the force of the comparison here used by Job, that the days which we live fly swift away. How rapidly is one after another added to the web of life! How soon will the whole web be filled up, and life be closed! A few more shoots of the shuttle and all will be over, and our life will be cut off, as the weaver removes one web from the loom to make way for another. How important to improve the fleeting moments, and to live as if we were soon to see the rapid shuttle flying for the last time! ¶ *And are spent without*

7 O remember that my life is wind: mine <sup>d</sup> eye shall <sup>1</sup> no more <sup>3</sup> see good.

8 The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more:

<sup>d</sup> Ge. 42. 36.

<sup>1</sup> not return. <sup>2</sup> to see, i. e., to enjoy.

*hope.* Without hope of recovery, or of future happiness on earth. It does not mean that he had no hope of happiness in the world to come. But such were his trials here, and so entirely had his comforts been removed, that he had no prospect of again enjoying life.

7. *O remember.* This is evidently an address to God. In the anguish of his soul, Job turns his eye and his heart to his Maker, and urges reasons why he should close his life. The extent of his sufferings, and the certainty that he must die (v. 9, 10), are the reasons on which he dwells why his life should be closed, and he released. The language is respectful, but it is the expression of deep anguish and sorrow. ¶ *That my life is wind.* Life is often compared with a vapor, a shadow, a breath. The language denotes that it is frail, and soon passed—as the breeze blows upon us, and soon passes by. Comp. Ps. lxxviii. 39:

For he remembered that they were but flesh;  
A wind that passeth away and cometh not again.

¶ *Mine eye shall no more.* Marg. as in Heb., *not return.* The idea is, that if he was cut off he would not return again to behold the pleasant scenes of this life. ¶ *See good.* Marg. *To see, i. e. to enjoy.* The sense is, that he would no more be permitted to look upon the things which now so much gratified the sight, and gave so much pleasure. There is some resemblance here to the feelings expressed by Hezekiah in his apprehension of death. See Notes on Isa. xxxviii. 10, 11.

8. *The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more.* I shall be cut off from all my friends—one of the things which most distresses men when they come to die. ¶ *Thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.* See ver. 21. Dr. Good

thine eyes *are* upon me, and I *am* not.

9 *As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.*

<sup>3</sup> i. e., *I can live no longer.*

renders this, “let thine eye be upon me, and I am nothing.” Herder, “thine eye will seek me, but I am no more.” According to this the sense is, that he was soon to be removed from the place where he had dwelt, and that should he be sought there, he could not be found. He would seem to represent God as looking for him, and not finding him. See ver. 21. The margin has, “I can live no longer.” It may be possible that this is the meaning; that God had fixed an intense gaze upon him, and that he could not survive it. If this is the sense, then it accords with the descriptions given of the majesty of God everywhere in the Scriptures—that nothing could endure his presence, that even the earth trembles, and the mountains melt away, at his touch. Thus in Ps. civ. 32:

He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth;  
He toucheth the hills, and they smoke.

Compare the representation of the power of the *eye* in Job xvi. 9:

He teareth me in his wrath who hateth me;  
He gnasheth upon me with his teeth;  
Mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me.

On the whole, I think it probable that this is the sense here. There is an energy in the original which is greatly enfeebled in the common translation. God had fixed his eyes upon Job, and he at once disappeared. Comp. Rev. xx. 11: “And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them.”

9. *As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away.* This image is taken from the light and fleecy clouds, which become smaller and smaller until they wholly vanish. For an illustration of a similar phrase, see Notes on Isa. xlv. 22. ¶ *To the grave—* ~~hence~~, Sheol. Sept.



10 He <sup>c</sup> shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.

11 Therefore I will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in the

<sup>c</sup> Ps. 49. 12, 14.

εις ᾗδην, to *Hades*. The word may mean *grave*, or the place of departed spirits. See Notes on Isa. v. 14, xiv. 9. Comp. Notes on Job, ch. x. 21, 22. Either signification will apply here. ¶ *Shall come up no more*. Shall no more live on the earth. It would be pressing this too far to adduce it as proving that Job did not believe in the doctrine of the resurrection. The connexion here requires us to understand him as meaning only that he would not appear again on the earth.

10. *He shall return no more to his house*. He shall not revisit his family. Job is dwelling on the calamity of death, and one of the circumstances most deeply felt in the prospect of death is, that a man must leave his own house to return no more. The stately palaces that he has built; the splendid halls which he has adorned; the chamber where he slept; the cheerful fireside where he met his family; the place at the table which he occupied, he will revisit no more. His tread will be no more heard; his voice will no more awaken delight in the happy family group; the father and husband returning from his daily toil will no more give pleasure to the joyous circle. Such is death. It removes us from all earthly comforts, takes us away from home and kindred—from children and friends, and bids us go *alone* to an unknown world. Job felt that it was a sad and gloomy thing. And so it is, unless there is a well-founded hope of a better world. It is the gospel only that can make us willing to leave our happy dwellings, and the embraces of kindred and friends, and to tread the lonely path to the regions of the dead. The friend of God has a brighter home in heaven. He has more numerous and better friends there. He has there a more splendid and happy mansion than any here on earth. He will be engaged in more blissful scenes

anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul

12 *Am I a sea, or a whale*, that thou settest a watch over me?

there than can be enjoyed by the most happy fireside here; will have more cheerful employments there, than any which can be found on earth; and will have higher and purer pleasures there, than can be found in parks, and lawns, and landscapes; in splendid halls, in music, and the festive board; in literary pursuits, and in the love of kindred. How far Job had the means of consolation from such reflections as these, it is not easy now to determine. The probability, however, is, that his views were comparatively dim and obscure.

11. *Therefore I will not refrain my mouth*. The idea in this verse is, “such is my distress at the prospect of dying, that I cannot but express it. The idea of going away from all my comforts, and of being committed to the grave, to revisit the earth no more, is so painful that I cannot but give vent to my feelings.”

12. *Am I a sea?* That is, “Am I like a raging and tumultuous sea, that it is necessary to restrain and confine me?” The sense of the verse is, that God had treated him as if he were untameable and turbulent, as if he were like the restless ocean, or as if he were some monster which could be restrained within proper limits only by the stern exercise of power. Dr. Good, following Reiske, renders this, “a savage beast,” understanding by the Hebrew word דָּם, a sea-monster, instead of the sea itself, and then, *any* ferocious beast, as the wild buffalo. But it is clear, I think, that the word never has this meaning. It means, properly, *the sea*; then, a lake or inland sea, and then, it is applied to any great river that spreads out like the ocean. Thus it is applied both to the Nile, and to the Euphrates. See Notes on Isa. xi. 15, xix. 5. Herder here renders it, “the river and its crocodile,” and this it seems to me is probably the

13 When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint;

14 Then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through

visions:

15 So that my soul chooseth strangling, *and* death rather than my <sup>1</sup> life.

<sup>1</sup> bones.

meaning. Job asks whether he is like the Nile, overflowing its banks, and rolling on impetuously to the sea, and, unless restrained, sweeping everything away. Some such flood of waters, and not a savage beast, is undoubtedly intended here. ¶ *Or a whale*, תַּנִּין, *tannin*.

Jerome, *cetus*—a whale. The LXX render it, δράκων, a dragon. The Chaldee paraphrases it, "Am I condemned as the Egyptians were, who were condemned and submerged in the Red Sea; or as Pharaoh, who was drowned in the midst of it, in his sins, that thou placest over me a guard?" Herder renders it, "the crocodile." On the meaning of the word, see Notes on Isa. xiii. 22, li. 9. It refers here probably to a crocodile, or some similar monster, that was found either in the Nile or in the branches of the Red Sea. There is no evidence that it means a whale. Harmer (Obs. iii. 536, Ed. Lond. 1808) supposes that the crocodile is meant, and observes that "Crocodiles are very terrible to the inhabitants of Egypt; when, therefore, they appear, they watch them with great attention, and take proper precautions to secure them, so that they should not be able to avoid the deadly weapons the Egyptians afterwards make use of to kill them." According to this, the expression in Job refers to the anxious care which is evinced by the inhabitants of countries where crocodiles abound to destroy them. Every opportunity would be anxiously watched for, and great solicitude would be manifested to take their lives. In countries, too, which were subject to inundation from waters, great anxiety would be evinced. The rising waters would be carefully watched, lest they should burst over all barriers, and sweep away fences, houses, and towns. Such a constant vigilance Job represents the Almighty as keeping over him—watching him as if he were a swelling,

roaring, and ungovernable torrent, or as if he were a frightful monster of the deep, whom he was anxious to destroy. In both respects the language is forcible, and in both instances scarcely less irreverent than it is forcible. For a description of the crocodile, see Notes on ch. xli.

13. *When I say, My bed shall comfort me.* The idea in this verse and the following is, that there was no intermission to his sorrows. Even the times when men usually sought repose were to him times of distress. Then he was disturbed and alarmed by the most frightful dreams and visions, and sleep fled from him. ¶ *Shall ease my complaint.* The word rendered "shall ease" (שָׁן) means, rather, *shall bear*; that is, shall lighten or sustain. The meaning is, that he sought relief on his bed.

14. *Then thou scarest me.* This is an address to God. He regarded him as the source of his sorrows, and he expresses his sense of this in language indeed very beautiful, but far from reverent. ¶ *With dreams.* See ver. 4. A similar expression occurs in Ovid:

"At puto, cum requies medicinaque publica curæ,

Somnus adest, solitis nox venit orba malis,  
Somnia me terrent, veros imitantia casus,  
Et vigilant sensus in mea damna mei."

De Ponto, Lib. i. Eleg. 2.

¶ *And terrifiest me through visions.* See Notes on ch. iv. 13. This refers to the visions of the fancy, or to frightful appearances in the night. The belief of such night-visions was common in the early ages, and Job regarded them as under the direction of God, and as being designed to alarm him.

15. *So that my soul.* So that *I*: the soul being put for himself. ¶ *Chooseth strangling.* Dr. Good renders it "suffocation," and supposes that Job alludes to the oppression of breathing, produced by what is commonly called the *night-*

16 I <sup>f</sup> loathe it; I would not

*s.c.* 10. 1. 20.

*mare*, and that he means that he would prefer the sense of suffocation excited at such a time to the terrible images before his mind. Herder renders it, *death*. Jerome, *suspendium*. The LXX, "Thou separatest (*ἀπαλλάξεις*) my life from my spirit, and my bones from death;" but what idea they attached to it, it is impossible now to tell. The Syriac renders it, "Thou chooseth (*ܠܚܝܬ*) my soul from perdition, and my bones from death." The word rendered *strangling* (*ܡܡܝܬ*) is from *ܡܡܝܬ*, to be narrow, strait, close; and then means to strangle, to throttle. Neh. ii. 13; 2 Sam. xvii. 23. Here it means *death*; and Job designs to say that he would prefer even the most violent kind of death to the life that he was then leading. I see no evidence that the idea suggested by Dr. Good is to be found in the passage. ¶ And *death rather than my life*. Marg. as in Hebrew, *bones*. There has been great variety in the exposition of this part of the verse. Herder renders it, "death rather than this frail body." Rosenmüller and Noyes, "death rather than my bones;" that is, he preferred death to such an emaciated body as he then had, to the wasted skeleton which was then all that he had left to him. This is probably the true sense. Job was a sufferer in body and in soul. His flesh was wasting away, his body was covered with ulcers, and his mind was harassed with apprehensions. By day he had no peace, and at night he was terrified by alarming visions and spectres; and he preferred death in any form to such a condition.

16. *I loathe it*. I loathe my life as it is now. It has become a burden, and I desire to part with it, and to go down to the grave. There is, however, considerable variety in the interpretation of this. Noyes renders it, "I am wasting away." Dr. Good connects it with the previous verse, and understands by it, "death in comparison with my sufferings do I despise." The Syriac is *ܠܚܝܬ ܡܡܝܬ*—*it fails to me*, i. e. I fail,

live alway: let me alone; for my days are vanity.

or, my powers are wasting away. But the Hebrew word *מָוֶה* means, properly, to loathe and contemn (see Note on ch. vii. 5), and the true idea here is expressed in the common version. The sense is, "my life is painful and offensive, and I wish to die." ¶ *I would not live alway*. As Job used this expression, there was doubtless somewhat of impatience and of an improper spirit. Still it contains a very important sentiment, and one that may be expressed in the highest state of just religious feeling. A man who is prepared for heaven should not, and will not, desire to live here always. It is better to depart and to be with Christ, better to leave a world of imperfection and sin, and to go to a world of purity and love. On this text, fully and beautifully illustrating its meaning, the reader may consult a sermon by Dr. Dwight. Sermons, Edinburgh, 1828, vol. ii. 275, seq. This world is full of temptations and of sin; it is a world where suffering abounds; it is the infancy of our being; it is a place where our knowledge is imperfect, and where the affections of the best are comparatively grovelling; it is a world where the good are often persecuted, and where the bad are triumphant; and it is better to go to abodes where all these will be unknown. Heaven is a more desirable place in which to dwell than the earth; and if we had a clear view of that world, and proper desires, we should pant to depart and to be there. Most men live as though they *would* live always here if they could do it, and multitudes are forming their plans as if they expected thus to live. They build their houses and form their plans as if life were never to end. It is the privilege of the Christian, however, to EXPECT to die. Not wishing to live always here, he forms his plans with the anticipation that all which he has must soon be left; and he is ready to loose his hold on the world the moment the summons comes. So may we live; so living, it will be easy to die. The sentiments suggested by this verse have been so beautifully ver-

17 What *is* man, that thou  
shouldst magnify him? and that  
g Ps. 8. 4.

sified in a hymn by Muhlenberg, that I  
will copy it here:

"I would not live alway; I ask not to stay  
Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the  
way; [here  
The few fleeting mornings that dawn on us  
Are enough for life's sorrows—enough for its  
cheer.

I would not live alway; no, welcome the tomb;  
Since Jesus hath lain there, I dread not its  
gloom;

There sweet be my rest, till he bid me arise,  
To hail him in triumph descending the skies.

Who, who would live alway, away from his  
God,

Away from yon heaven, that blissful abode,  
Where rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright  
plains,  
And the noontide of glory eternally reigns?

Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet,  
Their Saviour and brethren transported to  
greet;

While anthems of rapture unceasingly roll,  
And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the  
soul."

¶ *Let me alone.* This is an address to  
God. It means, "cease to afflict me.  
Suffer me to live out my little length of  
life with some degree of ease. It is  
short at best, and I have no desire that  
it should always continue." This sen-  
timent he illustrates in the following  
verses. ¶ *For my days are vanity.* They  
are as nothing, and are unworthy the  
notice of God. Life is a trifle, and I  
am not anxious that it should be pro-  
longed. Why then may I not be suf-  
fered to pass my few days without being  
thus afflicted and pained?

17. *What is man, that thou shouldst  
magnify him?* That thou shouldst make  
him great, or that thou shouldst regard  
him as of so great importance as to fix  
thine eye attentively upon him. The  
idea here is, that it was unworthy the  
character of so great a being as God to  
bestow so much time and attention on  
a creature so insignificant as man; and  
especially that man could not be of so  
much importance that it was necessary  
for God to watch all his defects with  
vigilance, and take special pains to mark  
and punish all his offences. This ques-  
tion *might* be asked in another sense.

thou shouldst set thine heart  
upon him?

and with another view. Man is so in-  
significant compared with God, that it  
may be asked why he should so care-  
fully provide for his wants? Why  
make so ample provision for his wel-  
fare? Why institute measures so  
amazing and so wonderful for his re-  
covery from sin? The answers to all  
these questions must be substantially the  
same. (1.) It is a part of the great  
plan of a condescending God. No in-  
sect is so small as to be beneath his  
notice. On the humblest and feeblest  
animalcula a care is bestowed in its for-  
mation and support as if God had no-  
thing else to regard or provide for.  
(2.) *Man is of importance.* He has an  
immortal soul, and the salvation of that  
soul *is worth* all which it costs, even  
when it costs the blood of the Son of  
God. (3.) A creature who sins, *always*  
makes himself of importance. The  
murderer has an importance in the view  
of the community which he never had  
before. All good citizens become in-  
terested to arrest and punish him.  
There is no more certain way for a man  
to give consequence to himself, than to  
violate the laws, and to subject himself  
to punishment. An offending member  
of a family has an importance which he  
had not before, and all eyes are turned  
to him with deep interest. So it is with  
man—a part of the great family of God.  
(4.) *A sufferer is a being of importance,*  
and man as a sufferer is worthy of the  
notice of God. However feeble may be  
the powers of any one, or humble his  
rank, yet if he suffers, and especially if  
he is likely to suffer forever, he becomes  
at once an object of the highest impor-  
tance. Such is man; a sufferer here,  
and liable to eternal pain hereafter; and  
hence the God of mercy has interposed  
to visit him, and to devise a way to  
rescue him from his sorrows, and from  
eternal death. The Syriac renders this,  
"What is man, that thou shouldst  
destroy him"—ܡܢ ܐܝܢ ܕܡܢ ܕܡܢ—  
but the Hebrew means, "to magnify him,  
to make him great, or of importance."

18 And *that* thou shouldest visit him every morning, *and* try him every moment?

¶ *That thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?* Not with affection, but to punish him—for so the expression in this connexion evidently means. The phrase itself might mean, “Why shouldst thou love him?”—implying that there was nothing in a creature so insignificant that could render him a proper object of the divine regard. But as used here by Job it means, “Why dost thou fix thy attention upon him so closely—marking the slightest offence, and seeming to take a special pleasure in inflicting pain and torture?” The Psalmist makes use of almost the same language, and not improbably copied it from this, though he employs it in a somewhat different sense. As used by him, it means, that it was wonderful that the God who made the heavens should condescend to notice a creature so insignificant as man.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,  
The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

What is man, that thou art mindful of him?  
And the son of man, that thou visitest him?

Ps. viii. 3, 4.

18. And *that* thou shouldest visit him. That is, for the purpose of inflicting pain. This language Job intends undoubtedly to be applicable to himself, and he asks with impatience why God should take a pleasure in visiting with suffering each returning day a creature like him? ¶ *Every morning.* Why is there no intermission even for a day? Why does not God allow one morning, or one moment, to pass without inflicting pain on a creature so feeble and so frail? ¶ *And try him.* Or, prove him; to wit, by afflictions. ¶ *Every moment?* Constantly; without intermission.

19. *How long wilt thou not depart.* How long is this to continue? The same word occurs in ch. xiv. 6. The word rendered “depart” (נָסָה) means, to look, to look around, and then, to look away from any one or anything. The idea here is, that God had fixed his

19 How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?

eyes upon Job, and he asks with anxiety, how long this was to continue, and when he would turn his eyes away. Comp. Notes on ver. 8. Schultens supposes that the metaphor here is taken from combatants, who never take their eyes from their antagonists. ¶ *Till I swallow down my spittle?* For the shortest time. But there has been considerable variety in the explanation of this phrase. Herder renders it, “Till I draw my breath.” Noyes, “Till I have time to breathe;” but he acknowledges that he has substituted this for the proverb which occurs in the original. The Hebrew is literally rendered in the common version, and the proverb is retained in Arabia to the present day. The meaning is, Give me a little respite; allow me a little time; as we would say, Suffer me to breathe. “This,” says Burder, “is a proverb among the Arabians to the present day, by which they understand, Give me leave to rest after my fatigue. This is the favor which Job complains is not granted to him. There are two instances which illustrate this passage (quoted by Schultens) in Harris’s Narratives, entitled the “Assembly.” One is of a person, who, when eagerly pressed to give an account of his travels, answered with impatience, “Let me swallow down my spittle, for my journey hath fatigued me.” The other instance is of a quick return made to a person who used the proverb. “Suffer me,” said the person importuned, “to swallow down my spittle;” to which the friend replied, “You may, if you please, swallow down even the Tigris and the Euphrates;” that is, You may take what time you please.” The expression is proverbial, and corresponds to ours when we say, “in the twinkling of an eye,” or, “till I can catch my breath;” that is, in the briefest interval. Job addresses this language to God. There is much impatience in it, and much that a pious man should not employ; but we are to remember that Job was beset with peculiar trials, and that he had not

20 I have sinned; <sup>h</sup> what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver <sup>i</sup> of men? why hast thou set me

<sup>h</sup> Ps. 80. 4.

<sup>i</sup> Ps. 36. 6.

as a mark <sup>k</sup> against thee, so that I am a burden to myself?

<sup>k</sup> La. 3. 12.

the views of the Divine existence and perfections, the promises and the high hopes, which as Christians we have under the fuller light of revelation; and before harshly condemning him, we should put ourselves in his situation, and ask ourselves how *we* would be likely to think and feel and speak if *we* were in the same circumstances.

20. *I have sinned*, אָשָׁאָה. This is a literal translation, and as it stands in the common version, it is the language of a penitent—confessing that he had erred, and making humble acknowledgment of his sins. That such a confession became Job, and that he would be willing to admit that he was a sinner, there can be no doubt; but the connexion seems rather to require a different sense—a sense implying that *though* he had sinned, yet his offences could not be such as to require the notice which God had taken of them. Accordingly, this interpretation has been adopted by many, and the Hebrew will bear the construction. It may be rendered as a question, “Have I sinned; what did I against thee?”—*Herder*. Or, the sense may be, “I have sinned. I admit it. Let this be conceded. But what can that be to a being like God, that he should take such notice of it? Have I injured him? Have I deserved these heavy trials? Is it proper that he should make me a special mark, and direct his severest judgments against me in this manner?” *Comp. Notes* on ch. xxxv. 6—8. The Syriac renders it in this manner, “If I have sinned (ܐܢܝܢܐ ܐܫܐܐܗ), what have

¶ *What shall I do unto thee*. Or, rather, what *have* I done unto thee? How can my conduct seriously affect thee? It will not mar thy happiness, affect thy peace, or in any way injure a being so great as God. This sentiment is often *felt* by men—but not often so honestly *expressed*. ¶ *O thou preserver of men?* Or, rather, “O thou that dost watch or observe men.” The word rendered “Preserver” (שָׁמַר) is a participle, from שָׁמַר, which means, according to Gesenius, to watch, to guard, to keep, and is here used in the sense of observing one's faults; and the idea of Job is, that God closely observed the conduct of men; that he strictly marked their faults, and severely punished them; and he asks with impatience, and evidently with improper feeling, why he thus closely watched men. So it is understood by Schultens, Rosenmüller, Dr. Good, Noyes, Herder, Kennicott, and others. The LXX render it, “who knowest the mind of men?” ¶ *Why hast thou set me as a mark*. The word rendered “mark” (סֵמֶן) means, properly, that which one impinges against—from שָׁם, to impinge against, to meet, to rush upon any one—and here means, why has God made me such an object of attack or assault? The LXX render it, κατεντευκτήν σου, “an accuser of thee.” ¶ *So that I am a burden to myself?* The LXX render this, ἐπὶ σοὶ φερόν, a burden to thee. The copy from which they translated evidently had הָיִיתִי, to thee, instead of הָיִיתִי, to me, as it is now read in the Hebrew. “The Masorites also place this among the eighteen passages which they say were altered by transcribers.”—*Noyes*. But the received text is sustained by all the versions except the LXX, and by all the Hebrew MSS. hitherto examined, and is doubtless the true reading. The sense is plain, that life had become a burden to Job. He says that God had made him the special object of his dis-

I done to thee?” So the Arabic, according to Walton. So the LXX. *Εἰ ἐγὼ ἥμαρτον*—“if I have sinned.” This expresses the true sense. The object is not so much to make a penitent confession, as it is to say, that on the worst construction of the case, on the admission of the truth of the charge, he had not deserved the severe inflictions which he had received at the hand of God.

21 And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away <sup>1</sup> mine iniquity? for now

℥ Mi. 7. 18, 19. 1 John 1. 9.

pleasure, and that his condition was insupportable. That there is much in this language which is irreverent and improper no one can doubt, and it is not possible wholly to vindicate it. Nor are we called to do it by any view which we have of the nature of inspiration. He was a good, but not a perfect man. These expressions are recorded, not for our imitation, but to show what human nature is. Before harshly condemning him, however, we should ask what *we* would be likely to do in his circumstances; we should remember also, that he had few of the truths and promises to support him which we have.

21. *And why dost thou not pardon my transgression.* Admitting that I have sinned (ver. 20), yet why dost thou not forgive me? I shall soon pass away from the land of the living. I may be sought, but I shall not be found. No one would be injured by my being pardoned—since I am so short-lived, and so unimportant in the scale of being. No one can be benefited by pursuing a creature of a day, such as I am, with punishment. Such seems to be the meaning of this verse. It is the language of complaint, and is couched in language filled with irreverence. Still it is language such as awakened and convicted sinners often use, and expresses the feelings which often pass through their hearts. They admit that they are sinners. They know that they must be pardoned, or they cannot be saved. They are distressed at the remembrance of guilt, and under this state of mind, deeply convicted and distressed, they ask with a murmuring spirit, *why* God does not pardon them? *Why* does he allow them to remain in this state of agitation, suspense, and deep distress? Who could be injured by their being forgiven? Of what consequence to others can it be that they should *not* be forgiven? How can God be benefited by his not pardoning them?

shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I <sup>m</sup> *shall* not *be*.

m Ps. 103. 15.

It may not be easy to answer these questions in a manner wholly satisfactory; but perhaps the following may be some of the reasons why *Job* had not the evidence of forgiveness which he now desired, and why the convicted sinner has not. *The main reason is, that they are not in a state of mind to make it proper to forgive them.* (1.) There is a feeling that they have a *claim* on God for pardon, or that it would be wrong for God *not* to pardon them. When men feel that they have a *claim* on God for pardon, they cannot be forgiven. The very notion of pardon implies that it must be when there is no *claim existing* or *felt*. (2.) There is no proper *submission* to God—to his views, his terms, his plan. In order that pardon may be extended to the guilty, there should be acquiescence in God's own terms, and time, and mode. The sinner must resign himself into his hands, to be forgiven or not as he pleases—feeling that the whole question is lodged in his bosom, and that if he should *not* forgive, still he would be right, and his throne would be pure. In particular, under the Christian method of pardon, there must be entire acquiescence in the plan of salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ; a willingness to accept of forgiveness, not on the ground of personal claim, but on the ground of his merits; and it is *because* the convicted sinner is not willing to be pardoned in this way, that he remains unforgiven. There should be a feeling, also, that it would be right for God to pardon others, if he pleases, even though *we* are not saved; and it is often because the convicted sinner is not willing that that should be done, because he feels that it would be *wrong* in God to save others and not *him*, that he is not forgiven. The sinner is often suffered to remain in this state until he is brought to acquiesce in the right of a sovereign God to save whom he pleases. (3.) There is a murmuring

spirit—and that is a reason why the sinner is not forgiven. That was manifestly the case with Job; and when that exists, how can God forgive? How can a parent pardon an offending child, when he is constantly complaining of his injustice and of the severity of his government? This very spirit is a new offence, and a new reason why he should be punished. So the awakened sinner murmurs. He complains of the government of God as too severe; of his law, as too strict; of his dealings, as harsh and unkind. He complains of his sufferings, and thinks they are wholly beyond his deserts. He complains of the doctrines of the Bible as mysterious, incomprehensible, and unjust. In this state how *can* he be forgiven? God often suffers the awakened sinner, therefore, to remain under conviction for sin, until he is willing to acquiesce in all his claims, and to submit without a murmur; and then, and not till then, he extends forgiveness to the guilty and troubled spirit. ¶ *For now shall I sleep in the dust.* On the word *sleep*, as applied to death, see Notes, ch. iii. 13. The meaning is, that he was soon to die. He urges the shortness of the time which remained to him as a reason why his afflictions should be lightened, and why he should be pardoned. If God had anything that he could do for him, it must be done soon. But only a brief period remained, and Job seems to be impatient lest the whole of his life should be gone, and he should sleep in the dust without evidence that his sins were pardoned. Olympiodorus, as quoted by Rosenmüller, expresses the sense in the following manner: “If, therefore, I am so short-lived [or momentary πρόσκαιρος] and obnoxious to death, and must die after a short time, and shall no more arise, as if from sleep, why dost not thou suffer the little space of life to be free from punishment?” ¶ *And thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be.* That is, thou shalt seek to find me after I have slept in the dust, as if with the expectation that I should wake, but I shall not be found. My sleep will be perpetual, and I shall no more return to the land of the living. His death, which *must* happen soon,

would put it out of the power even of God to show him mercy on earth, if he should relent and be inclined to favor him. He seems not to doubt that God *would* be disposed yet to show him favor; that he would be inclined to pardon him, and to relax the severity of his dealings with him, but he says that if it were done, it must be done soon, and seems to apprehend that it would be delayed so long that it could not be done. The phrase “in the morning,” here is used with reference to the *sleep* which he had just mentioned. We sleep at night, and awake and arise in the morning. Job says it would not be so with him in the sleep of death. He would awake no more; he could no more be found.—In this chapter there is much language of bitter complaint, and much which we cannot justify. It should not be taken as a model for our language when we are afflicted, though Job may have only *expressed* what has passed through the heart of many an afflicted child of God. We should not judge him harshly. Let us ask ourselves how *we* would have done if we had been in similar circumstances. Let us remember that he had comparatively few of the promises which we have to comfort us, and few of the elevated views of truth as made known by revelation, which we have to uphold us in trial. Let us be thankful that when we suffer, promises and consolations meet us on every hand. The Bible is open before us—rich with truth, and bright with promise. Let us remember that death is not as dark and dismal to us as it was to the pious in the time of the patriarchs—and that the grave is not now to us as dark, and chilly, and gloomy, and comfortless an abode. To their view, the shadow of death cast a melancholy chillness over all the regions of the dead; to us the tomb is enlightened by Christian hope. The empire of Death has been invaded, and his power has been taken away. Light has been shed around the tomb, and the grave to us is the avenue to immortal life; the pathway, on which the lamp of salvation shines, to eternal glory. Let us not complain, therefore, when we are afflicted, as if the blessing were long de-



ayed, or as if it could not be conferred should we soon die. If withheld here, it will be imparted in a better world, and we should be willing to bear trials in this

short life, with the sure promise that God will meet and bless us when we pass the confines of life, and enter the world of glory.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

THIS chapter contains the first reply which Bildad makes to Job. He is more severe and less argumentative than Eliphaz. Jaln, as quoted by the editor of the Pictorial Bible, thus characterizes him: "Bildad, less discerning and less polished than Eliphaz, breaks out at first into accusations against Job, and increases in vehemence as he proceeds. In the end, however, he is reduced to a mere repetition of his former arguments." Dr. Hales characterizes this speech not unjustly, as "unkind." Dr. Good remarks that he commences his speech "with most provoking cruelty." There is evidently much harshness in the language, and much severity of reproach. He pursues substantially the same line of argumentation which Eliphaz had commenced, but he does it with much more severity. He takes it for granted, that the children of Job had sinned, and that they had been cut off on account of their crimes. Assuming that Job and his family had been guilty of great sins, the drift of the discourse is, to exhort him to repent and to humble himself before God. The speech comprises the following points:—

1. He compares the speech of Job to a sweeping and violent tempest which prostrates all before it. How long, he asks, is this to continue? ver. 2.

2. He asks with earnestness whether the Almighty could pervert justice, as Job seems to have supposed? And in this question he implies, in the strongest manner, that God was just and right, ver. 3.

3. He takes it for granted that the children of Job had sinned, and that God had cut them down in their iniquity (ver. 4); but yet says, that if Job was an upright man, and would seek God in a humble and reverent manner, his favor might yet be obtained, and he would make his habitation prosperous, vs. 5—7. Though he should begin life again with none but himself, yet his end would be prosperous, and he would be blessed with a large increase. This part of the speech must have been particularly trying to Job. The assumption that his children had been cut down unpardoned, was one which would go at once to the heart of the much afflicted father, and greatly aggravate his sorrows.

4. In support of his views, Bildad appeals to the ancients, and especially to those who had lived much longer than they had done, and who had had an opportunity for more extended observation. He quotes from some ancient poem, representing by striking images the miserable condition of the wicked. The images in that ancient document are taken from what is observed in nature. The most succulent plants are soonest withered; and, in like manner, the hope of the hypocrite would soon fail, vs. 8—18.

5. He concludes by saying that God would not cast away a perfect man, and by stating the happy effects which would result from putting confidence in God, vs. 19—22. Bildad thus agrees substantially with Eliphaz in the opinion that Job was a hypocrite, and that it was for his sins that he had been punished in this manner. There is great severity in his remarks, and much that is unkind in his manner, and uncharitable in his views. There is less, too, that is argumentative than in the speech of Eliphaz. Yet there is a beautiful appeal to the past (vs. 11, seq.); and if this is a fragment of a former poem, it is probably the oldest on record.

THEN answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,  
2 How long wilt thou speak

these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?

1. Then answered Bildad the Shuhite. See Notes, ch. ii. 11.

2. How long wilt thou speak these things? The things of murmuring and complaint, such as he had uttered in the previous chapters. ¶ The words of thy mouth be like a strong wind? The

Syriac and Arabic (according to Walton) render this, "the spirit of pride fill thy mouth." The LXX render it, "The spirit of thy mouth is profuse of words"—*πολυρῆμον*. But the common rendering is undoubtedly correct, and the expression is a very strong and beau-

3 Doth <sup>a</sup> God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?

4 If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast

*a* De. 32. 4. 2 Ch. 19. 7. c. 34. 12, 17. Ps. 89. 14. Da. 9. 14. Ro. 3. 5, 6.

tiful one. His language of complaint and murmuring was like a tempest. It swept over all barriers, and disregarded all restraint. The same figure is found in Aristophanes, *Ran.* 872, as quoted by Schultens, *Τυφῶς ἐκβαίνειν παρὰ σκευζέται*—*a tempest of words is preparing to burst forth.* And in Silius Italicus, xi. 581:

“—qui tanta superbo  
Facta sonas ore, et spumanti turbine perfias  
Ignorantium aures.”

The Chaldee renders it correctly, *ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ*—*a great tempest.*

3. *Doth God pervert judgment?* That is, Does God afflict men unjustly? Does he show favor to the evil, and punish the good? Bildad here undoubtedly refers to Job, and supposes that he had brought this charge against God. But he had not done it in so many words. He had complained of the severity of his sufferings, and had indulged in irreverent language towards God. But he had not advanced the charge openly that God had perverted right. Bildad strenuously maintains that God would do right. His argument is based on the supposition that God would deal with men in this life according to their character; and thus he infers that Job must have been guilty of some great wickedness, that punishment should come upon him in this manner.

4. *If thy children have sinned against him.* Bildad here assumes that the children of Job had been wicked, and had been cut off in their sins. This must have cut him to the quick; for there was nothing which a bereaved father would feel more acutely than this. The meaning here is somewhat weakened by the word “if.” The Hebrew *אם* is rather to be taken in the sense of “since”—assuming it is an indisputable

them away <sup>1</sup> for their transgression;

5 If <sup>b</sup> thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty;

<sup>1</sup> *in the hand of their.*

<sup>b</sup> c. 11. 13. 22. 23, &c.

point, or taking it for granted. It was not a supposition that if they should now do it, certain other consequences would follow; but the idea is, that since they *had been* cut off in their sins, if Job would even now seek God with a proper spirit, he might be restored to prosperity, though his beginning should be small. Ver. 7. ¶ *And he have cast them away.* Bildad supposes that they had been disowned by God, and had been put to death. ¶ *For their transgression.* Marg., *in the hand of their.* The Hebrew is, *by the hand of their transgression*; i. e., their sin has been the cause of it, or it has been by the instrumentality of their sin. What foundation Bildad had for this opinion, derived from the life and character of the sons of Job, we have no means of ascertaining. The probability is, however, that he had learned in general that they had been cut off; and that, on the general principle which he maintained, that God deals with men in this life according to their character, he *inferred* that they must have been distinguished for wickedness. Men not unfrequently argue in this way when sudden calamity comes upon others.

5. *If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes.* If thou wouldst do it now. If, even on the supposition that your sons have thus perished, and that God has come out in judgment against your family, you would look to God, you might be restored to favor. The word rendered “seek betimes” (*רָצָה*) means, literally, to seek in the morning, to seek early; and then, to make it the first business. It is derived from the word meaning *aurora* (*רָצָה*), and has reference to the early light of the morning, and hence to an early seeking. It may be applied to seeking him in early life, or as the first thing—looking to him

6 If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

7 Though thy beginning was

*immediately* when help is needed, or before we apply to any one else. Comp. Prov. vii. 15; viii. 17; xiii. 24; Job xxiv. 5; Ps. lxxiii. 2; lxxviii. 34; Isa. xxvi. 9; Hos. v. 15. Comp. the advice of Eliphaz, ch. v. 8.

6. *If thou wert pure and upright.* There is something peculiarly severe and caustic in this whole speech of Bildad. He first assumes that the children of Job were cut off for impiety, and then takes it for granted that Job himself was not a pure and upright man. This inference he seems to have derived partly from the fact that he had been visited with so heavy calamities, and partly from the sentiments which Job had himself expressed. Nothing could be more unjust and severe, however, than to take it for granted that he was a hypocrite, and then proceed to argue as if that were a settled point. He does not make it a supposition that *possibly* Job might have erred—which would not have been improper; but he proceeds to argue as if it were a point about which there could be no hesitation. ¶ *He would awake for thee.* He would arouse or excite himself (עִירָה) on thy account. The image is that of arousing oneself from sleep or inactivity to aid another; and the idea is, that God had, as it were, slumbered over the calamities of Job, or had suffered them to come without interposing to prevent them, but that he would arouse himself if Job were pure, and would call upon him for aid. ¶ *And make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.* That is, if thy habitation should become righteous now, he would make it prosperous. Hitherto, is the idea of Bildad, it has been a habitation of wickedness. Thy children have been wicked, and are now cut off. Thou thyself hast been a wicked man, and in consequence art afflicted. If now thou wouldst become pure and seek unto God, then God would make

small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.

8 For enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers:

thy habitation prosperous. What could more try the patience of a sufferer than such cold and unfeeling insinuations? And what could more beautifully illustrate the nature of true courtesy, than to sit unmoved and hear such remarks? It was by forbearance in such circumstances eminently that Job showed his extraordinary patience.

7. *Though thy beginning was small.* On the supposition that the children of Job had been cut off, his family now was small. Yet Bildad says, that if he were to begin life again, even with so small a family, and in such depressed and trying circumstances, if he were a righteous man, he might hope for returning prosperity. ¶ *Yet thy latter end.* From this, it is evident that Job was not now regarded as an old man. He would still have the prospect of living many years. Some have supposed, however, that the meaning here is, that his former prosperity should appear small compared with that which he would hereafter enjoy if he were pure and righteous. So Noyes and Rosenmüller interpret it. But it seems to me that the former interpretation is the correct one. Bildad utters a general sentiment, that though when a man begins life he has a small family and little property, yet if he is an upright man, he will be prospered and his possessions will greatly increase. Comp. ch. xlii. 12: "Jehovah blessed the latter end of Job more than the beginning."

8. *For enquire, I pray thee, of the former age.* That is, attend to the results of observation. Ask the generations which have passed, and who in their poems and proverbs have left the records of their experience. The sentiment which Bildad proposes to confirm by this appeal is, that though the wicked should for a time flourish, yet they would be cut off, and that the righteous, though they may be for a time afflicted, yet if they seek God, they will ultimately prosper.

9 (For we <sup>t</sup> are <sup>1</sup> but of yesterday, and know <sup>1</sup> nothing, because

c Ps. 39. 5.

<sup>1</sup> not.

our days upon earth are a <sup>d</sup> shadow:)

d 1 Ch. 29. 15.

It was common to make these appeals to the ancients. The results of observation were embodied in proverbs, parables, fables, and fragments of poems; and he was regarded as among the wisest of men who had the fruits of these observations most at command. To that Bildad appeals, and especially, as would appear, to the fragment of an ancient poem which he proceeds to repeat, and which, perhaps, is the oldest poem extant in any language. ¶ *And prepare thyself.* Make an effort, or, give diligent attention to it. ¶ *To the search of their fathers.* Of the bygone generations, not only to the age immediately past, but to their ancestors. He would bring the results of the observation of far-distant ages to confirm the sentiment which he had advanced.

9. *For we are but of yesterday.* That is, we are of short life. We have had but few opportunities of observation compared with those who have gone before us. There can be no doubt that Bildad here refers to the longevity of the antecedent ages compared with the age of man at the time when he lived; and the passage, therefore, is of importance in order to fix the date of the poem. It shows that human life had been reduced in the time of Job within comparatively moderate limits, and that an important change had taken place in its duration. This reduction began not long after the flood, and was probably continued gradually until it reached the present limit of seventy years. This passage proves that Job could not have lived in the time of the greatest longevity of man. Comp. the Intro. § 3. ¶ *And know nothing.* Marg., *not.* So the Hebrew literally, "we do not know." The sense is, "we have had comparatively few opportunities for observation. From the comparative brevity of our lives, we see but little of the course of events. Our fathers lived through longer periods, and could mark more accurately the result of human conduct." One suggestion may be made

here, perhaps, of considerable importance in explaining the course of argument in this book. The friends of Job maintained that the righteous would be rewarded in this life, and that the wicked would be overtaken by calamity. It may seem remarkable that they should have urged this so strenuously, when in the actual course of events as we now see them, there appears to be so slender a foundation for it in fact. But may this not be accounted for by the remark of Bildad in the verse under consideration? They appealed to their fathers. They relied on the results of experience in those ancient times. When men lived nine hundred or a thousand years; when one generation was longer than twelve generations are now, this fact would be much more likely to occur than as human life is now ordered. Things would have time to work themselves right. The wicked in that long tract of time would be likely to be overtaken by disgrace and calamity, and the righteous would outlive the detractions and calumnies of their enemies, and meet in their old age with the ample rewards of virtue. Should men now live through the same long period, the same thing substantially would occur. A man's character, who is remembered at all, is fully established long before a thousand years have elapsed, and posterity does justice to the righteous and the wicked. If men lived during that time instead of being merely remembered, the same thing would be likely to occur. Justice would be done to character, and the world would, in general, render to a man the honor which he deserved. This fact may have been observed in the long lives of the men before the flood, and the result of the observation may have been embodied in proverbs, fragments of poems, and in traditionary sayings, and have been recorded by the sages of Arabia as indubitable maxims. With these maxims they came to the controversy with Job, and forgetful of the

10 Shall not they teach thee,  
and tell thee, and utter words  
out of their heart?

change necessarily made by the abbreviation of human life, they proceed to apply their maxims without mercy to him; and because he was overwhelmed with calamity, they assumed that therefore he *must* have been a wicked man. ¶ *Our days upon earth* are a *shadow*. Comparisons of this kind are quite common in the Scriptures. See Notes on ch. vii. 6. A similar figure occurs in 1 Chron. xxix. 15:

For we are strangers before thee,  
And sojourners, as were all our fathers:  
Our days upon earth are as a shadow,  
Yea, there is no abiding.

An expression similar occurs in Æschylus, Agam. ver. 488, as quoted by Drusus and Dr. Good:

—εἰδωλον σκιας—

—the image or semblance of a shade—

So in Pindar, man is called *σκιάς ὄναρ*—the dream of a shade; and so by Sophocles, *καπνοῦ σκιά*—the shadow of smoke. All these mean the same thing, that the life of man is brief and transitory. Bildad designs to apply it, not to man in general, but to the age in which he lived, as being disqualified by the shortness of life to make extended observations.

10. *Shall not they teach thee.* The results of human conduct, and the great principles on which God governs the world. ¶ *And utter words out of their heart?* Dr. Good renders this,

“And well forth the sayings of their wisdom,” and supposes it means, that the words of wisdom would proceed from them as water bubbles from a fountain. But this, I think, is a mere conceit. The true sense is, that they would not speak that merely which comes from the mouth, or that which comes uppermost, and without reflection—as the Greeks say, *λέγειν πᾶν ὃ, τι ἐπὶ στόμα ἔλθῃ*; or, as the Latins, *Quicquid in buccam venerit loqui*—to speak whatever comes in the mouth; but they would utter that which came from the heart—which was sincere, and the result of deep and pro-

11 Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?

longed reflection. Perhaps, also, Bildad means to insinuate that Job had uttered what was uppermost in his mind, without taking time for reflection.

11. *Can the rush.* This passage has all the appearance of being a fragment of a poem handed down from ancient times. It is adduced by Bildad as an example of the views of the ancients, and, as the connexion would seem to imply, as a specimen of the sentiments of those who lived before the life of man had been abridged. It was customary, in the early ages of the world, to communicate knowledge of all kinds by maxims, moral sayings, and proverbs; by apothegms and by poetry handed down from generation to generation. Wisdom consisted much in the amount of maxims and proverbs which were thus treasured up; as it now consists much in the knowledge which we have of the lessons taught by the past, and in the ability to apply that knowledge to the various transactions of life. The records of past ages constitute a vast storehouse of wisdom, and the present generation is more wise than those which have gone before, only because the results of their observations have been treasured up, and we can act on their experience, and because we can begin where they left off, and, taught by their experience, can avoid the mistakes which they made. The word “*rush*” here (רֹמֶשׁ) denotes, properly, a bulrush, and especially the Egyptian papyrus—*papyrus Nilotica*. See Notes on Isa. xviii. 2. It is derived from the verb רָמַשׁ, to absorb, to drink up, and is given to this plant because it absorbs or drinks up moisture. The Egyptians used it to make garments, shoes, oaskets, and especially boats or skiffs. Pliny, Nat. Hist. 13. 21—26. See Notes on Isa. xviii. 2. They also derived from it materials for writing—and hence our word *paper*. The LXX render it here, *πάπυρος*, *papyrus*. ¶ *Without mire?* Without moisture. It grew in the

12 Whilst <sup>e</sup> it is yet in his  
e Ps. 129. 6. Mat. 13. 20.

marshy places along the Nile. ¶ *Can the flag.* Another plant of a similar character. The word *flag*, says Gesenius, is an Egyptian word, signifying *marsh-grass, reeds, bulrushes, sedge*, everything which grows in wet grounds. The word was adopted not only into the Hebrew, but also into the Greek idiom of Alexandria, where it is written, *ἄχι. ἄχου*. Jerome says of it, "When I inquired of the learned what this word meant, I heard from the Egyptians, that

greenness, *and* not cut down, it withereth before any *other* herb.

by this name everything was intended in their language which grew up in a pool." The word is synonymous with rush, or bulrush, and denotes a plant which absorbs a great quantity of water. The annexed engraving will show the usual form of this weed in Egypt, and the manner in which it grows, and the necessity of water for its support. In the engraving it is represented as growing in the water.



What is the exact idea which this figure is designed to convey is not very clear. I think it probable that the whole description is intended to represent a hypocrite, and that the meaning is, that he had in his growth a strong resemblance to such a rush or reed. There was nothing solid or substantial in his piety. It was like the soft, spongy texture of the water-reed, and would wilt under trial, as the papyrus would when deprived of water.

12. *Whilst it is yet in his greenness.* That is, while it seems to be in its vigor. ¶ *And not cut down.* Even

when it is not cut down. If suffered to stand by itself, and if undisturbed, it will wither away. The application of this is obvious and beautiful. Such plants have no self-sustaining power. They are dependent on moisture for their support. If that is withheld, they droop and die. So with the prosperous sinner and the hypocrite. His piety, compared with that which is genuine, is like the spongy texture of the paper-reed compared with the solid oak. He is sustained in his professed religion by outward prosperity, as the rush is nourished by moisture; and the moment

13 *So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope<sup>f</sup> shall perish:*

*f.c. 11. 20. 27. 8. Pr. 10. 28.*

his prosperity is withdrawn, his religion droops and dies, like the flag without water.

13. *So are the paths of all that forget God.* This is clearly a part of the quotation from the sayings of the ancients. The word *paths* here means *ways, acts, doings*. They who forget God are like the paper-reed. They seem to flourish, but they have nothing that is firm and substantial. As the paper-reed soon dies, as the flag withers away before any other herb, so it will be with the wicked, though apparently prosperous. ¶ *And the hypocrite's hope shall perish.* This important sentiment, it seems, was known in the earliest periods of the world; and if the supposition above be correct, that this is a fragment of a poem which had come down from far distant times, it was probably known before the flood. The passage requires no particular philological explanation, but it is exceedingly important. We may remark on it, (1.) That there were hypocrites even in that early age of the world. They are confined to no period, or country, or religious denomination, or profession. There *are* hypocrites in religion—and so there are in politics, and in business, and in friendship, and in morals. There are pretended friends, and pretended patriots, and pretended lovers of virtue, whose hearts are false and hollow, just as there are pretended friends of religion. Wherever there is genuine coin, it will be likely to be counterfeited; and the fact of a counterfeit is always a tribute to the intrinsic worth of the coin—for who would be at the pains to counterfeit that which is worthless? The fact that there are hypocrites in the church is an involuntary tribute to the excellency of religion. (2.) The hypocrite has a hope of eternal life. This hope is founded on various things. It may be on his own morality; it may be on the expectation that he will be able to practise a deception; it may be on some wholly false and unfounded view of the character and plans of God.

14 Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust *shall be a spider's<sup>1</sup> web.*

<sup>1</sup> *house.* Is. 59. 5, 6.

Or, taking the word *hypocrite* in a larger sense, to denote any one who pretends to religion and who has none, this hope may be founded on some change of feeling which he has had, and which he mistook for religion; on some supposed vision which he had of the cross or of the Redeemer, or on the mere subsiding of the alarm which an awakened sinner experiences, and the comparative peace consequent on that. The mere cessation of fear produces a kind of peace—as the ocean is calm and beautiful after a storm—no matter what may be the cause, whether it be true religion or any other cause. Many a sinner, who has lost his convictions for sin in any way, mistakes the temporary calm which succeeds for true religion, and embraces the hope of the hypocrite. (3.) That hope will perish. This may occur in various ways. (a) It may die away insensibly, and leave the man to be a mere professor of religion—a formalist, without comfort, usefulness, or peace. (b) It may be taken away in some calamity by which God tries the soul, and where the man will see that he has no religion to sustain him. (c) It may occur under the preaching of the gospel, when the hypocrite may be convinced that he is destitute of vital piety, and has no true love to God. (d) It may be on a bed of death—when God comes to take away the soul, and when the judgment-seat appears in view. (e) Or it will be at the bar of God. Then the hope of the hypocrite will certainly be destroyed. Then it will be seen that he had no true religion, and then he will be consigned to the awful doom of him who in the most solemn circumstances lived to deceive, and who assumed the appearance of that which he had the strongest reason to believe he never possessed. Oh! how important it is for every professor of religion to examine himself, that he may know what is the foundation of his hope of heaven!

14. *Whose hope shall be cut off.* Schultens supposes that the quotation

15 He shall lean upon his house, but it <sup>s</sup> shall not stand : he shall hold it fast, but it shall

g Mat. 7. 26.

from the ancients closes with ver. 13, and that these are the comments of Bildad on the passage to which he had referred. Rosenmüller and Noyes continue the quotation to the close of ver. 19; Dr. Good closes it at ver. 13. It seems to me that it is extended farther than ver. 13, and probably it is to be regarded as continued to the close of ver. 18. The beginning of this verse has been very variously rendered. Dr. Good says that it has never been understood, and proposes to translate it, "thus shall his support rot away." Noyes renders it, "whose expectation shall come to nought;" Gesenius, "shall be cut off." Jerome, *Non ei placebit vecordia sua*, "his madness [dotage, rage, or frenzy] shall not please him." The LXX, "his house shall be uninhabitable, and his tent shall pass away as the spider." The Hebrew word translated "cut off" (קָטַע) is from קָטַע, *kûṭ*, usually meaning to loathe, to nauseate, to be offensive. Gesenius supposes that the word here is synonymous with the Arabic قَطَعَ—to be cut off.

But this sense does not occur elsewhere in the Hebrew, and it is doubtful whether this is the true sense of the phrase. In the Hebrew word there is probably always the idea of loathing, of being offensive, irksome, or disgusting. See Ps. xcvi. 10, I was grieved; Job x. 1, is weary; Ezek. vi. 9, shall loathe; so Ezek. xx. 43; xxxvi. 31; Ezek. xvi. 47, a tiresome, or disgusting object. Taylor (Concord.) renders it here, "Whom his hope shall loathe or abominate, i. e., who shall loathe or hate the thing that he hopes for." I have no doubt that the meaning here is, to be loathsome, offensive, or nauseous, and the correct sense is, "whose hope shall rot." The figure is continued from the image of the paper-reed and the flag, which soon decay; and the idea is, that as such weeds grow offensive and putrid in the stagnant water, so shall it be with

not endure.

16 He *is* green before the sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden.

the hope of the hypocrite. ¶ *And whose trust.* Whose confidence, or expectation. ¶ *A spider's web.* Marg. house. So the Heb. בֵּית. The spider's house is the web which it forms, a frail, light, tenuous substance, which will sustain almost nothing. The wind shakes it, and it is easily brushed away. So it will be with the hope of the hypocrite.

15. *He shall lean upon his house.* This is an allusion to the web or house of the spider. The hope of the hypocrite is called the house which he has built for himself, his home, his refuge, his support. But it shall fail him. In times of trial he will trust to it for support, and it will be found to be as frail as the web of the spider. How little the light and slender thread which a spider spins would avail a man for support in time of danger! So frail and unsubstantial will be the hope of the hypocrite! It is impossible to conceive any figure which would more strongly describe the utter vanity of the hopes of the wicked. A similar comparison occurs in the Koran, Sur. 28, 40: "They who assume any other patrons to themselves besides God, are like the spider building his house; for the house of the spider is most feeble." ¶ *He shall hold it fast.* Or, he shall lay hold on it to sustain him, denoting the avidity with which the hypocrite seizes upon his hope. The figure is still taken from the spider, and is an instance of a careful observation of the habits of that insect. The idea is, that the spider, when a high wind or a tempest blows, seizes upon its slender web to sustain itself. But it is insufficient; the wind sweeps all away. So the tempest of calamity sweeps away the hypocrite, though he grasps at his hope, and would seek security in that, as a spider does in the light and tenuous thread which it has spun.

16. *He is green before the sun.* Vulg. *antequam veniat sol—before the sun comes.* So the Chaldee, "before the rising of



17 His roots are wrapped about the heap, and seeth the place of stones.

the sun." So Eichhorn renders it. According to this, which is probably the true interpretation, the passage means that he is green and flourishing before the sun rises, but that he cannot bear its heat, and withers away. A new illustration is here introduced, and the object is to compare the hypocrite with a vigorous plant, that grows up quick and sends its branches afar, but which has no depth of root, and which, when the intense heat of the sun comes upon it, withers away. The comparison is not with a *tree*, which would bear the heat of the sun, but rather with those succulent plants which have a large growth of leaves and branches, like a gourd or vine, but which will not bear a drought or endure the intense heat of the sun. "This comparison of the transitory nature of human hope and prosperity to the sudden blight which overthrows the glory of the forest and of the garden," says the Editor of the Pictorial Bible (on Ps. xxxvii. 35), "is at once so beautiful and so natural as to have been employed by poets of every age." One such comparison of exquisite finish occurs in Shakespeare:

"This is the state of man! To-day he puts forth  
The tender leaves of hope; to-morrow blossoms,  
And bears his blushing honors thick upon him;  
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost,  
And, when he thinks, good easy man, full surely  
His greatness is a ripening, nips his shoot,  
And then he falls, as I do."

¶ And his branch shooteth forth, &c. A comparison of a prosperous person or nation with a *vine* which spreads in this manner, is common in the Scriptures. See Ps. lxxx. 11:

"She sent out her boughs unto the sea,  
And her branches unto the river."

Comp. Note on Isa. xvi. 8. A similar figure occurs in Ps. xxxvii. 35:

"I have seen the wicked in great power,  
And spreading himself like a green bay tree."

17. *His roots are wrapped about the heap.* There has been great diversity of opinion in the interpretation of this passage. Jerome renders it, "over the heap of stones his roots are condensed." Walton, *super fontem—over a fountain.*

The LXX, "he lies down [or sleeps, κοιμάται] on a heap of stones; and he lives in the midst of flint-stones." According to some, the word rendered *heap* (הֵבֵל) means a *fountain*; according to others, it means a heap or pile of stones; according to Dr. Good, it means a rock. According to the view of the former, it refers to the flourishing condition of a hypocrite or sinner, and means that he is like a tree that sends its roots by a fountain, and is nourished by it. According to others, the reference is to the fact that the hypocrite is like a plant that has no depth of earth for its roots, that wraps its roots around anything, even a heap of stones, to support itself; and that consequently will soon wither under the intense heat of the sun. The word הֵבֵל, rendered "*heap*," means either (1.) a heap, as a heap of stones, from הָבַל—to roll, as e. g. stones. It may denote a heap of stones, Josh. vii. 26, but it commonly refers to the ruins of walls and cities, Jer. ix. 10; li. 37; Isa. xxv. 2. It means (2.) a fountain or spring, so called from the rolling or welling up of the waters, Cant. iv. 12, and hence rolling waves or billows, Ps. xlii. 8; lxxxix. 10; cvii. 25, 29. The *parallelism*, if nothing else, demands that the usual signification should be given to it here; and the true sense is, that the prosperous wicked man, or the hypocrite, is like a plant which stands in the midst of rocks, rubbish, or old ruins, and not like one that stands in a fertile soil, where it may strike its roots deep. The reference is to the fact that a tree or plant which springs up on a rock, or in the midst of rocks, will send its roots afar for nutriment, or will wrap them around the projecting points of rocks in order to obtain support. All have observed this in trees standing on rocks; but the following extract from Silliman's Journal for January, 1840, will illustrate the fact referred to here more fully:—

"About fifteen years ago, upon the top of an immense boulder of limestone, some ten or twelve feet in diameter, a

18 If he destroy him from his place, then *it* shall deny him, *say-*

*ing*, I <sup>h</sup> have not seen thee.

h Ps. 37. 36.

sapling was found growing. The stone was but slightly imbedded in the earth; several of its sides were raised from four to six feet above its surface; but the top of the rock was rough with crevices, and its surface, which was sloping off on one side to the earth, was covered with a thin mould. From this mould the tree had sprung up, and having thrust its roots into the crevices of the rock, it had succeeded in reaching the height of some twelve or fifteen feet. But about this period the roots on one side became loosened from their attachment, and the tree gradually declined to the opposite side, until its body was in a parallel line with the earth. The roots on the opposite side, having obtained a firmer hold, afforded sufficient nourishment to sustain the plant, although they could not, alone, retain it in its vertical position. In this condition of things, the tree, as if 'conscious of its wants,' adopted (if the term may be used) an ingenious process, in order to regain its former upright position. One of the most vigorous of the detached roots sent out a branch from its side, which, passing round a projection of the rock, again united with the parent stalk, and thus formed a perfect loop around this projection, which gave to the root an immovable attachment.

"The tree now began to recover from its bent position. Obeying the natural tendency of all plants to grow erect, and sustained by this root, which increased with unwonted vigor, in a few years it had entirely regained its vertical position, elevated, as no one could doubt who saw it, by the aid of the root which had formed this singular attachment. But this was not the only power exhibited by this remarkable tree.

"After its elevation, it flourished vigorously for several years. Some of its roots had traced the sloping side of the rock to the earth, and were buried in the soil below. Others, having embedded themselves in its furrows, had completely filled these crevices with vegetable matter. The tree still continuing to grow, concentric layers of

vegetable matter were annually deposited between the alburnum and liber, until, by the force of vegetable growth alone, the rock was split from the top to the bottom, into three nearly equal divisions, and branches of the roots were soon found extending down, through the divisions, into the earth below. On visiting the tree a few months since, to take a drawing of it, we found that it had attained an altitude of fifty feet, and was four feet and a half in circumference at its base."

The image here shows that the author of this beautiful fragment was a careful observer of nature, and the comparison is exceedingly pertinent and striking. What more beautiful illustration of a hypocrite can there be? His roots do not strike into the earth. His piety is not planted in a rich soil. It is on the hard rock of the unconverted human heart. Yet it sends out its roots afar; seems to flourish for a time; draws nutriment from remote objects; clings to a crag or a projecting rock, or to anything, for support — until a tempest sweeps it down to rise no more! No doubt the idea of Bildad was, that Job was just such a man. ¶ *Seeth the place of stones.* Sept., "and lives in the midst of flints," not an unapt rendering — and a very striking description of a hypocrite. So Castelleo, *existit inter lapides*. Its only nutriment is derived from the scanty earth in the stony soil on which it stands, or in the crevices of the rocks.

18. *If he destroy him from his place.* The particle here which is rendered "if" (אם) is often used to denote emphasis, and means here *certainly*—"he shall be certainly destroyed." The word rendered *destroy*, from שָׁח, means literally, to swallow (ch. vii. 19), to swallow up, to absorb; and hence to consume, lay waste, destroy. The sense is, that the wicked or the hypocrite shall be wholly destroyed from his place, but the image or figure of the *tree* is still retained. Some suppose that it means that *God* would destroy him

19 Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others <sup>i</sup> grow.

20 Behold, God <sup>k</sup> will not cast away a perfect man, neither will

<sup>i</sup> Mat. 3. 9.

<sup>k</sup> Ps. 94. 14.

from his place; others, as Rosenmüller and Dr. Good, suppose that the reference is to the soil in which the tree was planted, that it would completely absorb all nutriment, and leave the tree to die; that is, that the dry and thirsty soil in which the tree is planted, instead of affording nutriment, acts as a "sucker," and absorbs itself all the juices which would otherwise give support to the tree. This seems to me to be probably the true interpretation. It is one drawn from nature, and one that preserves the continuity of the passage. ¶ *Then it shall deny him.* That is, the soil, the earth, or the place where it stood. This represents a wicked man under the image of a tree. The figure is beautiful. The earth will be ashamed of it; ashamed that it sustained the tree; ashamed that it ever ministered any nutriment, and will refuse to own it. So with the hypocrite. He shall pass away as if the earth refused to own him, or to retain any recollection of him. ¶ *I have not seen thee.* I never knew thee. It shall utterly deny any acquaintance with it. There is a striking resemblance here to the language which the Saviour says he will use respecting the hypocrite in the day of judgment: "and then will I profess to them, I never knew you." Matth. vii. 23. The hypocrite has never been known as a pious man. The earth will refuse to own him as such, and so will the heavens.

19. *Behold, this is the joy of his way.* This is evidently sarcastic. "Lo, such is the joy of his course! He boasts of joy, as all hypocrites do, but his joy endures only for a little time. This is the end of it. He is cut down and removed, and the earth and the heavens disown him!" ¶ *And out of the earth shall others grow.* This image is still derived from the tree or plant. The meaning is, that such a plant would be

he <sup>l</sup> help the evil doers;

21 Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with <sup>2</sup> rejoicing.

<sup>l</sup> take the ungodly by the hand.  
<sup>2</sup> shouting for joy.

taken away, and that others would spring up in its place which the earth would not be ashamed of. So the hypocrite is removed to make way for others who will be sincere, and who will be useful. Hypocrites and useless men in the church are removed to make way for others who will be active and devoted to the cause of the Redeemer. A similar sentiment occurs in ch. xxvii. 16, 17. This closes, as I suppose, the quotation which Bildad makes from the poets of the former age, and in the remainder of the chapter he states another truth pertaining to the righteous. This fragment is one of the most interesting that can be found anywhere. As a relic of the earliest times, it is exceedingly valuable; as an illustration of the argument in hand, and of the course of events in this world, it is eminently beautiful. It is as true now as it was when uttered before the flood, and may be used now as describing the doom of the hypocrite, with as much propriety as then, and it may be regarded as one of the way-marks in human affairs, showing that the government of God, and the manner of his dispensations, are always substantially the same.

20. *Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man.* On the meaning of the word *perfect*, see Note, ch. i. 1. The sentiment of Bildad, or the inference which he draws from the whole argument, is, that God will be the friend of the pious, but that he will not aid the wicked. This accords with the general sentiment maintained in the argument of the friends of Job. ¶ *Neither will he help the evil doers.* Marg. *Take the ungodly by the hand.* This is in accordance with the Hebrew. The figure is that of taking one by the hand in order to assist him. See Isa. xlii. 6.

21. *Till he fill thy mouth with laughing.* Till he make thee completely happy. The word rendered "till" (עד), is ren-

22 They that hate thee shall dwell in the dwelling place of the wicked shall be clothed with <sup>1</sup> shame; and the <sup>1</sup> come to nought.

i Ps. 132. 18.

<sup>1</sup> not be.

dered by Dr. Good, "even yet." Noyes, following Houbigant, De Wette, and Michaelis, proposes to change the pointing, and to read *וְ*, instead of *וְ*, meaning, "while." The verse is connected with that which follows, and the particle here used evidently means "while," or "even yet"—and the whole passage means, "if you return to God, he will even yet fill you with joy, while those who hate you shall be clothed with shame. God will show you favor, but the dwelling of the wicked shall come to nought." The object of the passage is to induce Job to return to God, with the assurance that if he did, he would show mercy to him, while the wicked should be destroyed. ¶ *With rejoicing.* Marg. *Shouting for joy.* The word

used (*וְ*) is properly that which denotes the clangor of a trumpet, or the shout of victory and triumph.

22. *They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame.* When they see your returning prosperity, and the evidences of the divine favor; they will then be ashamed that they regarded you as a hypocrite, and that they reproached you in your trials. ¶ *And the dwelling place of the wicked, &c.* The wicked shall be destroyed, and his family shall pass away. That is, God will favor the righteous, but punish the wicked. This opinion the friends of Job maintain all along, and by this they urge him to forsake his sins, repent, and return to God.

## CHAPTER IX.

### ANALYSIS OF CHAPTERS IX. AND X.

THIS chapter and the following comprise the answer of Job to the speech of Bildad. It may be remarked in general, that the object of Job in these arguments is not to prove that he was entirely faultless. He was charged with being a hypocrite, and his opponents in the argument proceeded on the presumption that he was a wicked man. Against this he protests, and maintains his own innocence of the charge. By this he does not mean absolute perfection. He means that he is free from the secret crimes of which he was accused; that he is not chargeable with uncommon guilt, such as they alleged; or, that he is a sincere and an upright man. It may also be observed, that there are evidences in the speeches of Job that he is agitated with contending passions. Fear, hope, confidence, despair, and a sense of the severity of his sufferings, by turns have possession of his mind, and he gives vent in turn to them all. There is therefore, at times, apparent inconsistency in his language and thoughts; but the object of the poem was to exhibit these contending emotions, and to show how the mind is agitated in scenes like these.

The substance of the reply of Job to Bildad here is the following:

He admits in general the truth of what Bildad had said, that no one can be just with God, and that if God should enter into judgment with man, he could not answer him for one of a thousand of his offences. He thus shows that he had recovered his equanimity, and that he never meant in vindicating his own innocence to maintain that he was absolutely free from sin, vs. 1—3. He proceeds to argue that God is an absolute sovereign; that he distributes favors and judgments in accordance with his own inscrutable will; that men ought not to presume to sit in judgment on the doings of the Almighty; and that even if he had the fullest conviction of his own innocence, he would not presume to enter into an argument with him, but would make supplication to him, vs. 4—15. These thoughts are worthy of a man who had full confidence in God. They show the calm and deliberate judgment of Job, and prove that he was a pious man, though the severity of his sufferings, and the provocation which he met with, led him sometimes to express sentiments little in accordance with these. He proceeds to say (vs. 16—21), that he is so feeble that he could have no hope of prevailing in a controversy with God; and that though he were conscious of innocence, he would not set up a defence when God judged otherwise: for that in such a case his attempt to vindicate himself would prove that he was perverse. The principle here advanced is, that God must be right. He is great, and glorious, and holy; and

men ought to believe, however much they may suffer, that the principles of his government are equitable and true. When *he* judges man to be a sinner, it *must* be so. The highest proof of human guilt is the fact that God regards man as a sinner. He proceeds (vs. 22—24) to advance the sentiment on which he so much insisted, that misery, so far from being proof of uncommon guilt, is equally the portion of the righteous and the wicked. He maintains that his sufferings do not prove that he is a bad man, for that calamities come upon all alike. He passes now to a contemplation of his own sufferings, and in the course of his description of his afflictions he is again led to give vent to feelings of a much less noble and elevated character than those which he had just expressed. When arguing in the abstract about God, he is right; when his mind contemplates his own sorrows, he becomes impatient, and often uses language of murmuring and complaint. He says (vs. 25—28) that his days are swift and are full of sorrow, and that he cannot forget his sufferings and find comfort. He adds (vs. 29—35) that God is so great that he cannot enter into an argument with him; that he is reduced to silence by his mere power; that there is no daysman between him and God before whom the cause might be presented; and that if God would remove his calamity, he would then state his feelings fully, and without fear. But this could not be; and though he should say ever so much in his own vindication, and wash himself in snow-water, yet that God would plunge him into the ditch and overwhelm him with the consciousness of guilt, and hold him guilty still.

In ch. x. he prosecutes the argument, and indulges himself in a much greater latitude of expression and of feeling than he had done in ch. ix. In particular, he expostulates with great earnestness and pathos with God on account of his treating a creature—the work of his own hands—with such severity. He says (ver. 1) that he is weary of his life, for it is a burden; addresses God directly, and in a solemn manner, as his Maker, and asks why he deals thus with a poor, frail, and helpless creature whom he has made; acknowledges that all that he has is from God, appeals to God himself in proof that he is not a wicked man, and asks why he deals with him in this awful manner (vs. 2—12); and says that God marked him out and hunted him down as a lion, and multiplied the tokens of his indignation so that he was utterly overwhelmed and confounded, vs. 13—17. As he proceeds he grows warmer; is roused to desperation at the idea that God is his enemy; and again vehemently wishes for death as a relief for his woes, asking only for a little respite before he goes down to the land of darkness and of shades, vs. 18—22. There are marks of great agitation of feeling, of deep emotion, of mingled sensibilities, in these chapters, and the whole is a remarkable illustration of the feelings which even pious men sometimes have in trials.

**T**HEN Job answered and said,  
2 I know *it is* so of a truth:

2. *I know it is so of a truth.* Job here refers, undoubtedly, to something that had been said before; but whether it is to the general strain of remark, or to some particular expression, may be doubted. Rosenmüller supposes that he refers to what was said by Eliphaz in ch. iv. 17; but it seems more probable that it is to the general position which had been laid down and defended, that God was just and holy, and that his proceedings were marked with equity. Job admits this, and proceeds to show that it was a truth quite as familiar to him as it was to them. The object of his dwelling on it seems to be, to show them that it was no new thing to him, and that he had some views on that important subject which were well worthy of attention. ¶ *But how should man be just with God?* Marg. before. The meaning is, that he could not be regarded as perfectly holy in the sight of God; or that so holy and pure a being as God must see that man was a

but <sup>a</sup> how should man be just <sup>1</sup> with God?

<sup>a</sup> Ps. 132. 18. Ro. 3. 20.

<sup>1</sup> or, *before*.

sinner, and regard him as such. See the sentiment explained in the Notes on ch. iv. 17. The question here asked is, in itself, the most important ever propounded by man—"How shall sinful man be regarded and treated as righteous by his Maker?" This has been the great inquiry which has always been before the human mind. Man is conscious that he is a sinner; he feels that he must be regarded as such by God. Yet his happiness here and hereafter, his peace and all his hope, depend on his being treated *as if* he were righteous, or regarded as just before God. This inquiry has led to all forms of religion among men; to all the penances and sacrifices of different systems; to all the efforts which have been made to devise some system that shall make it proper for God to treat men as righteous. The question has never been satisfactorily answered except in the Christian revelation, where a plan is disclosed by which God "may be just,

3 If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.

and yet the justifier of him that believeth." Through the infinite merits of the Redeemer, man, though conscious that he is personally a sinner, may be treated as if he had never sinned; though feeling that he is guilty, he may consistently be for ever treated as if he were just. The question asked by Job implies, that such is the evidence and the extent of human guilt that man can never justify himself. This is clear and indisputable. Man cannot justify himself by the deeds of the law. Justification, as a work of law, is this: A man is charged, for example, with the crime of murder. He sets up in defence that he did not kill, or that if he took life it was in self-defence, and that he had a right to do it. Unless the fact of killing be proved, and it be shown that he had no right to do in the case as he has done, he cannot be condemned, and the law acquits him. It has no charge against him, and he is just, or justified in the sight of the law. But in this sense man can never be just before God. He can neither show that the things charged on him by his Maker were not done, or that being done, he had a right to do them; and being unable to do this, he must be held to be guilty. He can never be justified, therefore, by the law, and it is only by that system which God has revealed in the gospel, where a conscious sinner may be treated as if he were righteous through the merits of another, that a man can ever be regarded as just before God. See Notes on Rom. i. 17; iii. 24, 25.

3. *If he will contend with him.* That is, if God enters into a controversy with man; if he chooses to charge crime on him, and to hold him responsible for his deeds. The language here is taken from courts of justice, and means that if a trial were instituted, where God should submit charges, and the matter were left to adjudication, man could not answer the charges against him. Comp.

4 *He<sup>b</sup> is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against him, and*

*b* Jude 24, 25.

Notes on Isa. xli. 1. ¶ *He cannot answer him one of a thousand.* For one of a thousand of the sins charged on him. The word *thousand* here is used to denote the largest number, or *all*. A man who could not answer for one charge brought against him out of a thousand, must be held to be guilty; and the expression here is equivalent to saying that he could not answer him at all. It may also be implied that God has many charges against man. His sins are to be reckoned by *thousands*. They are numerous as his years, his months, his weeks, his days, his hours, his moments; numerous as his privileges, his deeds, and his thoughts. For not one of those sins can he answer. He can give no satisfactory account before an impartial tribunal for any of them. If so, how deeply guilty is man before God! How glorious that plan of justification by which he can be freed from this long list of offences, and treated as though he had not sinned!

4. He is *wise in heart*. Herder renders this,

"Even the wise and the powerful,  
Who hath withstood him and prospered?"

But the more common interpretation is to refer it to God. The meaning of Job appears to be, that God was a sagacious adversary; that he was able to manage his cause; that he could meet and refute all objections which could be urged; and that it would be in vain to engage in a litigation before him. He so well understood the whole ground of debate, and was so entirely skilled in the merits of the controversy, and could so successfully meet all that could be alleged, that it was useless to attempt to hold an argument with him. ¶ *And mighty in strength.* He is able to execute all his designs, and to carry all his purposes into effect. Man is weak and feeble, and it is hopeless for him to attempt to contend with the Almighty. ¶ *Who hath hardened himself against him, and*

**hath prospered?**

5 Which removeth the mountains, and they know not: which overturneth them in his anger.

*hath prospered?* To harden oneself, here means to resist or withstand him. It refers to the firmness or resolution which one is obliged to adopt who opposes another. Here it means the opposition which man makes to the law and government of the Most High; and the affirmation is, that no one can make such opposition who will not be ultimately overcome. God is so great, so powerful, and so just, that a successful resistance cannot be made. The arrangements of God will take their course, and man must yield to his claims and his government, or be prostrated. None can successfully resist God; and the true policy of man, as well as his duty, is to yield to him, and be at peace with him. ¶ *And hath prospered.* Or been successful. He has failed in his opposition, and been obliged to yield. Prosperity is not found in opposing God. It is only by *falling in* with his arrangements and following his designs. A prosperous voyage is made by falling in with winds and currents, and not in opposing them; prosperous agriculture is carried on by coinciding with the favorable seasons of the year, and taking advantage of the dews, and rains, and sunbeams, that God sends, and not in opposing them; prosperity in regard to health is found in taking advantage of the means which God gives to secure it, and not in opposing them. And the sinner in his course has no more chance of success and prosperity than a man would have who should make it a point or principle of life always to sail against tides, and currents, and head-winds; or he who should set at defiance all the laws of husbandry, and plant on a rock, or in the dead of winter; or he who should feed himself on poison rather than on nutritious food, and cultivate the nightshade rather than wheat. The great principle is, that if a man desires prosperity, he must fall in with the arrangements of God in his providence and grace; and wisdom is seen in study-

6 Which <sup>c</sup> shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.

c He. 12. 26.

ing these arrangements, and in yielding to them.

5. *Which removeth the mountains.* In order to show how vain it was to contend with God, Job refers to some exhibitions of his power and greatness. The "removal of the mountains" here denotes the changes which occur in earthquakes and other violent convulsions of nature. This illustration of the power of God is often referred to in the Scriptures. Comp. Judges v. 5; 1 Kings xix. 11; Ps. lxxv. 6, cxiv. 4, cxliv. 5; Isa. xl. 12; Jer. iv. 24. ¶ *And they know not.* This is evidently a Hebraism, meaning suddenly, or unexpectedly. He does it, as it were, before they are aware of it. A similar expression occurs in the Koran, "God overturns them, and they do not know it;" i. e., he does it without their suspecting any such thing. Comp. Ps. xxxv. 8. "Let destruction come upon him at unawares," or, as it is in the Heb. and in the margin, *which he knoweth not of.* Tindal renders this, "He translateth the mountaynes or ever they be aware." ¶ *Which overturneth them in his anger.* As if he were enraged. There could scarcely be any more terrific exhibition of the wrath of God than the sudden and tremendous violence of an earthquake.

6. *Which shaketh the earth out of her place.* This evidently refers to violent convulsions of nature, as if the earth were to be taken away. Objects on the earth's surface become displaced, and convulsion seems to seize the world. The LXX render this, "who shaketh that which is under the heavens from its foundations"—ἐκ θεμελίων. The change in the Hebrew would be very slight to authorize this rendering. ¶ *And the pillars thereof tremble.* In this place the earth is represented as sustained, like a building, by pillars or columns. Whether this is a mere poetic representation, or whether it describes the actual belief of the speaker in regard to the structure of the earth, it is not

7 Which commandeth the sun,  
and it riseth not; and sealeth  
up the stars.

d Jos. 10. 12.

easy to determine. I am inclined to think it is the former, because in another place, where he is speaking of the earth, he presents his views in another form, and more in accordance with the truth (see Notes on ch. xxvi. 7); and because here the illustration is evidently taken from the obvious and perceived effects of an earthquake. It would convulse and agitate the pillars of the most substantial edifice, and so it seemed to shake the earth, as if its very supports would fall.

7. *Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not.* Schultens supposes that all this is a description of the deluge—when the mountains were removed, when the fountains of the deep were broken up, and when the sun was obscured and seemed not to rise. Others have supposed that it refers to the fact that the sun is darkened by clouds and tempests, and appears not to rise and shine upon the earth. Others suppose that the allusion is to an eclipse; and others, that it is to the power of God, and means that the rising of the sun depends on him, and that if he should choose to give the command, the heavenly bodies would rise and give light no more. It seems probable that the meaning is, that God has power to do this; that the rising of the sun depends on him; and that he could delay it, or prevent it, at his pleasure. His power over the sun was shown in the time of Joshua, when, at his command, it stood still; but it is not necessary to suppose that there is any reference to this fact here. The whole meaning of the language is met by the supposition that it refers to the power of God, and affirms what he *could* do, or if it refer to any fact that had been observed, that the allusion is to the darkening of the sun by an eclipse or a tempest. No argument can be derived, therefore, from the expression, in regard to the age of the book. ¶ *And sealeth up the stars.* The word *seal* in the

8 Which alone spreadeth out  
the <sup>c</sup> heavens, and treadeth <sup>f</sup> upon  
the <sup>l</sup> waves of the sea.

e Ps. 104. 2, 3. Is. 40. 22, 28. f Mat. 14. 25.  
<sup>l</sup> heights.

Scriptures (סָתַר) is used with considerable latitude of signification. It is employed in the sense of shutting, closing, making fast—as when anything was sealed, it was shut up and made fast. The Hebrews often used a *seal* where we would use a *lock*, and depended on the protection derived from the belief that one would not break open that which was sealed, where we are obliged to rely on the security of the lock against force. If there were honor and honesty among men everywhere, a seal would be as secure as a lock—as in a virtuous community a sealed letter is as secure as a merchant's iron "safe." To *seal up the stars*, means so to shut them up in the heavens, as to prevent their shining; to hide them from the view. They are concealed, hidden, made close—as the contents of a letter, a package, or a room are by a seal, indicating that no one is to examine them, and concealing them from the view. So God hides from our view the stars by the interposition of clouds.

8. *Which alone spreadeth out the heavens.* As an expanse, or a curtain. See Notes on Isa. xl. 22. ¶ *And treadeth upon the waves of the sea.* Marg. *Heights.* So it is in the Hebrew. It means the *high waves*; that is, he walks upon the waves of the ocean when lifted up by a storm. This is spoken of here as a proof of the greatness of God; and the meaning of all is, that he is seen in the storm, in the heaving ocean, when the heavens are black with tempest, and when the earth is convulsed. It may be added here, that the Lord Jesus walked amidst the howling winds on the lake, and thus gave evidence that he was God. Matth. xiv. 25. "The Egyptian hieroglyphic for what was not possible to be done, was a man walking on water." *Burder.* Dr. Good, and some others, render this, "on the mountains." But the more correct rendering is given in the common version. The Hebrew word rendered "waves" (מַגְגַּי) indeed,



9 Which <sup>g</sup> maketh <sup>1</sup> Arcturus,<sup>g</sup> Am. 5. 8.<sup>1</sup> *Ash, Cesil, and Cimah.*

properly means a height, a lofty place, a mountain; but the comparison of waves with a mountain is common in all languages. So we speak of waves "mountain-high," or as high as mountains. So Virgil, *Æneid* i. 105:

"Insequitur cumulo præruptus aquæ mons."

Similar to this is the expression occurring in Homer, *κύματα ἴσα ὕρουν*; and so Apollonius, i. 521—*άλος ἄκρα*. The LXX render it, "who walketh upon the sea as upon a pavement."

9. Which maketh Arcturus. This verse, with others of the same description in the book of Job, is of especial importance, as they furnish an illustration of the views which prevailed among the patriarchs on the subject of astronomy. There are frequent references to the sciences in this book (see the Introduction), and there is no source of illustration of the views which prevailed in the earliest times in regard to the state of the sciences so copious as can be found in this poem. The thoughts of men were early turned to the science of astronomy. Not only were they led to this by the beauty of the heavens, and by the instinctive promptings of the human mind to know something about them, but the attention of the Chaldeans and of the other Oriental nations was early drawn to them by the fact that they were shepherds, and that they passed much of their time in the open air at night, watching their flocks. Having nothing else to do, and being much awake, they would naturally contrive to relieve the tediousness of the night by watching the movements of the stars; and they early gave employment to their talents, by endeavoring to ascertain the influence which the stars exerted over the fates of men, and to their imagination, by dividing the heavens into portions, having a fancied resemblance to certain animals, and by giving them appropriate names. Hence arose the arrangement of the stars into *constellations*, and the names which they still bear. The Hebrew word rendered *Arcturus*, is *אֲשׁ*, *ash*. The LXX render

Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south.

it, *Πλειάδα*—the *Pleiades*. Jerome, *Arcturum*. The Hebrew word usually means a *moth*, Job iv. 19, xiii. 28, xxvii. 18. It also denotes the splendid constellation in the Northern hemisphere, which we call Ursa Major, the Great Bear, Arcturus; or the Wain. Comp. Niebuhr, *Des. of Arabia*, p. 114. The word *אֲשׁ* does not literally mean a *bear*, but is made by *aphæresis* from the Arabic *نَاش*, *nas*, by the excision of

the initial *n*—as is common in Arabic. See Bochart, *Hieroz.* P. II. Lib. I. c. xvi. pp. 113, 114. The word in Arabic means a *bier*, and is the name given to the constellation which we denominate Ursa Major—"because," says Bochart, "the four stars, which are a square, are regarded as a bier, on which a dead body is borne. The three following (the tail of the bear) are the daughters or sons which attend the funeral as mourners." This name is often given to this constellation in Arabic. The Arabic name is *El-na'sch*, the bier. "The expression," says Ideler, "denotes particularly the bier on which the dead are borne, and taken in this sense, each of the two biers [in the Ursa Major and Ursa Minor] is accompanied by three mourning-women. The biers and the mourning-women together are called *Benât-n'asch*, literally, *daughters of the bier*; that is, those who pertain to the bier." *Untersuchungen über den Ursprung und die Bedeutung der Sternnamen*, S. 419. Comp. ch. xxxviii. 32: "Canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?" Schultens regards the word *אֲשׁ* as synonymous with the Arabic

*عَسَ* *night vigil*, from *عَسَ* *to go about by night*, and supposes this constellation to be so called, because it always revolves around the pole, and never sets. The situation and figure of this constellation are well known. It is seen at all times in the northern part of the heavens, perpetually revolving around the North Star, and two of its principal stars point to the North Star always. Its resem-

blance to a bear is quite fanciful—as it might be imagined as well to resemble any other object. The design of this fancy was merely to assist the memory. The only thing which seems to have suggested it was its slight resemblance to an animal, followed by its young. Thus the stars, now known as the “tail,” might have been supposed to resemble the cubs of a bear following their dam. The comparison of the constellation to a *bier*, and the movement to a funeral procession, with the sons or daughters of the deceased following on in the mourning train, is much more poetical and beautiful. This constellation is so conspicuous, that it has been an object of interest in all ages, and has been one of the groups of stars most attentively observed by navigators, as a guide in sailing. The reason was, probably, that as it constantly revolved around the North Pole, it could always be seen in clear weather, and thus the direction in which they were sailing could always be told. It has had a great variety of names. The name *Ursa Major*, or the Great Bear, is that which is commonly given to it. It is a remarkable fact, also, that while this name was given to it in the East, a tribe of the American Indians—the Iroquois, also gave the same name of the Great Bear to it. This is remarkable, because, so far as known, they had no communication with each other, and because the name is perfectly arbitrary. Is this an evidence that the natives of our country derived their origin from some of the nations of the East? In some parts of England the constellation is called ‘Charles’ Wain,” or Wagon, from its fancied resemblance to a wagon, drawn by three horses in a line. Others call it the *Plough*. The whole number of visible stars in this constellation is eighty-seven, of which one is of the first, three of the second, seven of the third, and about twice as many of the fourth magnitude. The constellations of *Ursa Major* and *Ursa Minor* were represented by the ancients under the image of a wagon drawn by a team of horses. This is alluded to by the Greek poet, *Aratus*, in an address to the Athenians:

“The one called *Helix*, soon as day retires  
Observed with ease lights up his radiant fires;  
The other, smaller, and with feebler beams,  
*In a less circle drives his lazy teams*;  
But more adapted for the sailor’s guide,  
Whene’er by night he tempts the briny tide.”

Among the Egyptians these two constellations are represented by the figures of bears, instead of wagons. Whence the Hebrew name is derived is not quite certain; but if it be from the Arabic, it probably means the same—a *bier*. There seems no reason to doubt, however, that the *Ursa Major* is intended; and that the idea here is, that the greatness of God is shown by his having made this beautiful constellation. ¶ *Orion*. The Vulgate renders this *Orion*, the LXX, “Ἑσπερον, *Hesperus*—i. e., the evening star, *Venus*. The word כֶּסֶל, *hesil*, is from כָּסָה, *kásal*, to be fat or fleshy; to be strong, lusty, firm; and then to be dull, sluggish, stupid—as fat persons usually are. Hence the word כֶּסֶל, means a *fool*. Ps. xlix. 11; Prov. i. 32, x. 1. It is used here, however, to denote a constellation, and by most interpreters it is supposed to denote the constellation *Orion*, which the Orientals call a *giant*. “They appear to have conceived of this constellation under the figure of an impious giant bound upon the sky.” *Gesenius*. Hence the expression, Job xxxviii. 31, “Canst thou loose the bands of Orion?” According to the Eastern tradition, this giant was *Nimrod*, the founder of *Babylon*, afterwards translated to the skies. See Notes on Isa. xiii. 10, where it is rendered *constellation*. Virgil speaks of it as the *Stormy Orion*.

“Cum subito assurgens fluctu nimbosus Orion.”  
ÆN. i. 535.

And again:

“Dum Pelago descevit hyems, et aquosus Orion.”  
ÆN. iv. 52.

In another description of *Orion* by Virgil, it is represented as armed with gold, or surrounded by a yellow light:

“Arcturum, pluviasque Hyades, geminosque  
Triones,  
Armatumque auro circumspicit Oriona.”  
ÆN. iii. 510, 517.

According to the fancy of the ancients, *Orion* was a mighty hunter, the attendant of *Diana*, who having offered vio-

lence to her, was stung to death by a scorpion which she had provided for that purpose. After his death, he was translated to heaven and made a constellation. Others say that he was the son of Neptune and Queen Euryale, a famous Amazonian huntress; and possessing the disposition of his mother, he became the greatest hunter in the world, and made a boast that there was no animal on earth that he could not subdue. To punish this vanity, it is said that a scorpion sprang out of the earth and bit his foot, so that he died, but that at the request of Diana he was placed among the stars, and directly opposite to the scorpion that caused his death. On the names given to this constellation in Arabic, and the origin of the name *Orion* among the Greeks, see Ideler, *Unter über den Urs. u. die Bedeut. der Stern. s.* 212—227, 331—336. The name *El-dschebbâr*, the giant, or hero, is that which is commonly given to it in Arabic. The constellation Orion is usually mentioned by the ancients as connected with storms, and hence is called *nimbosus Orion* by Virgil, and *tristis Orion* by Horace. The reason of this was, that its rising usually occurred at those seasons of the year when storms prevailed, and hence it was supposed to be their cause—as we connect the rising of the dog-star with the idea of intense heat. The situation of Orion is on the equator, midway between the poles of the heavens. It comes to the meridian about the 23rd of January. The whole number of visible stars in it is seventy-eight, of which two are of the first magnitude, four of the second, three of the third, and fifteen of the fourth. It is regarded as the most beautiful of the constellations, and when it is on the meridian there is then above the horizon the most magnificent view of the celestial bodies that the firmament exhibits. On the celestial maps it is represented by the figure of a man in the attitude of assaulting the Bull, with a sword in his belt, a huge club in his right hand, and a lion-skin in the left to serve him for a shield. The principal stars are four, in the form of a long square or parallelogram, intersected by the “Three Stars” in the middle, called “The Ell and the Yard.”

The two upper ones are represented one on each shoulder, and of the two lower ones one is in the left foot, and the other on the right knee. The position of the constellation may be seen by any one by remarking that the “Three Stars” in the belt are those which point to the Pleiades or seven stars on the one side, and to the dog-star on the other. This constellation is mentioned by Homer, as it is indeed by most of the classic writers:

Πληιαδας θ', Ὑάδας τε, τὸ τε σθένης Ὠριωνος.  
Il. σ.

It may furnish an illustration of the vastness of the starry heavens to remark, that in the sword of the constellation Orion there is a *nebula* which is almost visible to the naked eye, which is computed to be 2,200,000,000,000,000,000, or two trillions two hundred thousand billions times larger than the sun! *Dr. Dick*, *Chr. Keepsake* for 1840, p. 184. If, then, Job, with his limited views of astronomy, saw in this constellation an impressive proof of the greatness of the Almighty, how much more sublime should be our views of God! We see this constellation, not merely as a beautiful object in the sky—a collection of bright and beautiful gems—but we see it as so vast as to surpass our comprehension, and behold in it a single *nebula*, or speck—not quite visible to the naked eye—that mocks all our powers of conception! It may be added, that by the aid of a telescope about two thousand stars have been seen in this constellation. ¶ *And Pleiades*. The seven stars. The Hebrew word is קִמָּה, *kimá*, a heap, or cluster. The name is given to the cluster of stars in the neck of the constellation *Taurus*, of which seven are the principal. Six or seven may be usually seen if the eye is directed towards it; but if the eye be turned carelessly aside while the attention is fixed on the group, many more may be seen. For, “it is a very remarkable fact,” says Sir John Herschell, “that the centre of the visual organ is by far less sensible to feeble impressions of light than the exterior portion of the retina.” *Ast.* p. 398. Telescopes show fifty or sixty large stars there crowded together into

a small space. Rheita affirms that he counted two hundred stars in this small cluster. In regard to the Pleiades, Ideler makes the following remarks:—"These stars were by the ancients sometimes denoted by the singular, Πλειάς, *Pleias*, and sometimes by the plural, Πλειάδες (in metrical composition, Πληϊάδες), *Pleiades*. They are mentioned by Homer, *Ili.* σ. 486, *Od.* ε. 272, and by Hesiod, *Epy.* 383, 615. Hesiod mentions the cluster as *the daughter of Atlas*—Ἀτλαγενεῖς. The name *Atlantides*, which so often occurs among the Romans, signifies the same thing. Their mythological names are Alcyone, Merope, Celaeno, Electra, Sterope or Asterope, Taygete, and Maia. There is some uncertainty among the ancient writers whence the name *Pleiades* is derived. Among most etymologists, the name has respect to navigation, and the derivation is from ἀπὸ τοῦ πλεῖν—because the time of navigation commenced with the rising of the Pleiades in the first part of May, and ended with their setting in the first part of November. But perhaps the name is derived simply from πλεός, πλεῖος, *full*, so that it merely denotes a condensed assemblage of stars, which Manilius, *iv.* 523, expresses by *glomerabile sidus*. Aratus, *v.* 257, says that the Pleiades were called ἐπτάποροι—those which walked in seven paths, although but six stars can be seen. In a similar sense, Ovid, speaking of the Pleiades, says,

"Quæ septem dici, sex tamen esse solent."

FAST. *iv.* 170.

Hipparchus, on the contrary, affirms that in a clear night, when there is no moon, seven stars can be seen. The difference of these views is easily explained. The group consists of one star of the third magnitude, three of the fifth, two of the sixth, and many smaller stars. It requires a very keen vision to be able to distinguish in the group more than six stars. Since, therefore, among the ancients, it was commonly believed that there was no more than six, and yet among them, as with us, the name *the seven stars* was given to them, the opinion arose that one star of the seven had been lost. Some supposed that it had been smitten by lightning; others, that it

had united itself to the middle star in the tail of the Ursa Major; and others gave to the belief a mythic signification, as is mentioned by Ovid in the place above referred to. The Romans called the Pleiades *Vergiliæ*, because they arose in the spring. The Arabians called these stars *El-thoreja*—meaning *abundant, copious*, and answering to the Greek Πλειάς, *Pleias*. The Asiatic poets Sadi, Hafiz, and others, always mention these stars as a beautiful *rosette*, with one brilliant. Sadi, in the description of a beautiful garden, says, "The ground was strewn with pieces of enamel, and bands of Pleiades appeared to hang on the branches of the trees." Hafiz says, "The heavens bear up thy poems—the pearly rosette of the Pleiades as the seal of immortality." Beigel, who has translated these poets, adds, "In this genuine Oriental spirit must we understand the words of Job, 'Canst thou bind the brilliant rosettes of the Pleiades?' that is, Who can say that he has placed this collection of brilliants as a rosette in the sky?" Ideler, *Untersuchungen über den Urs. u. die Bedeut. der Sternnamen*, s. 143—147. ¶ *And the chambers of the south*. What is the exact idea to be attached to this expression, it is not easy to say. Probably it means the remote regions of the south, or the part of the heavens which is not visible to the inhabitants of the northern hemisphere. The word rendered *chambers* means in the Scriptures a private apartment of a dwelling; a part that is separated from the rest by a curtain; a harem, &c. Hence it may mean the abodes of the stars in the south—comparing the heavens with an immense *temple*, and regarding it as divided into separate apartments. It may mean here the stars which are hidden, as it were, in the recesses of the southern hemisphere, like the private apartments of a house, which all are not allowed to enter. There are some intimations in the book of Job that the true structure of the earth was not unknown at that remote period of the world (*comp. Notes*, ch. xxvi. 7); and if so, then this may refer to the constellations in the south which are invisible to an inhabitant of the northern hemisphere. There is no

10 Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number.

11 Lo, he goeth by me, and I see *him* not: he passeth on also, but I perceive him not.

12 Behold, he taketh away,

impropriety, at any rate, in supposing that those who had travelled into the south had brought reports of stars and constellations seen there which are invisible to an inhabitant of northern Arabia.

10. *Which doeth great things.* This is almost the sentiment which had been expressed by Eliphaz. See Notes, ch. v. 9. It was evidently a proverb, and as such was used by both Eliphaz and Job.

11. *Lo, he goeth by me.* That is, he passes along—as in the silent movements of the heavenly bodies. “I see the evidence of his existence. I can see that God must be there—moving along by me in the orbs of night and in the march of the constellations, but I cannot see God himself. He passes *by*, or rather, he passes *over* me (הַיָּ), as in the majestic movement of the heavenly bodies over my head.” This is, I think, the idea, and the image is exceedingly poetic and beautiful. The heavens are seen to move in silent grandeur. The northern constellation rolls around the pole. The others move on as a marshalled army. They go in silent and solemn order, and *God must be there*. But, says Job, I cannot see him. I can feel that he must be there, and I look out on the heavens to see him, but my eyes fail, and I cannot behold him. He passes on, and I see him not. Who has ever looked upon the heavens in the still night, and seen the silent grandeur of such movements of the heavenly host, without some such feeling—some emotion of inexpressible awe—as if he, if I may so express it, COULD ALMOST SEE GOD?

12. *Behold, he taketh away.* Property, friends, or life. ¶ *Who can hinder him?* Marg. *Turn him away.* Or ra-

who can hinder <sup>1</sup> him? who <sup>h</sup> will say unto him, What doest thou?

13 *If* God will not withdraw his anger, the <sup>2</sup> proud helpers do stoop under him.

<sup>1</sup> turn him away? c. 11. 10.

<sup>h</sup> Da. 4. 35.

<sup>2</sup> helpers of pride, or, strength.

ther, “who shall cause him to restore?” i. e., who can bring back what he takes away? He is so mighty, that what he removes, it is impossible for us to recover. ¶ *Who will say unto him, What doest thou?* A similar expression occurs in Dan. iv. 35. The meaning is plain. God has a right to remove anything which we possess. Our friends, property, health, and lives, are his gift, and he has a right to them all. When he takes them away, he is but taking that which is his own, and which has been lent to us for a little time, and which he has a right to remove when it seems good to him. This truth Job fully admits, and in the calm contemplation of all his losses and his sorrows, he acknowledges that God had a right to do as he had done. See Note, ch. i. 21.

13. *If God will not withdraw his anger.* That is, if he perseveres in inflicting punishment. He will not turn aside his displeasure by any opposition or resistance made to him. ¶ *The proud helpers.* Marg., *Helpers of pride, or, strength.* Jerome renders this, “under whom they who bear up the world bow down.” The LXX, not less singularly, “by him the whales [or monsters—κῆρυγ] which are under heaven, are bowed down.” Codureus renders it, “aids of pride,” and understands by it all the things on which proud men rely, as wealth, health, rank, talent. So Dr. Good renders it, “the supports of the proud.” The meaning is, probably, that all those things which contribute to the support of *pride*, or all those persons who are allied together to maintain the dominion of pride on the earth, must sink under the wrath of God. Or it may refer to those who sustain the pride of state and empire—the men who stand around the

14 How much less shall I answer him, *and* choose out my words *to reason* with him?

15 Whom, though I were

thrones of monarchs, and who contribute, by their talent and power, to uphold the pomp and magnificence of courts. On the meaning of the word here rendered *pride* (דָּבָר), see Notes on Isa. xxx. 7.

14. *How much less shall I answer him?* I, who am so feeble, how can I contend with him? If the most mighty objects in the universe are under his control; if the constellations are directed by him; if the earth is shaken, and mountains moved from their places, by his power; and if the men of most exalted rank are prostrated by him, how can I presume to contend with God? This is the common view which is given of the passage, and is evidently that which our translators entertained. But I have given in the translation what appears to me to be a more literal version, and to express a better sense—though, I confess, the translation differs from all that I have seen. According to this, the sense is simply, that such was the veneration which Job had for the character of God, that should he attempt to answer him, he would select his words with the utmost care and attention.

15. *Whom, though I were righteous.* That is, if I felt the utmost confidence that I was righteous, yet if God judged otherwise, and regarded me as a sinner, I would not reply to him, but would make supplication to him *as a sinner*. I would have so much confidence in him, and would feel that he was so much better qualified than I am to judge, and that I am so liable to be deceived, that I would come to him as a sinner, if he judged and declared me to be one, and would plead for pardon. The meaning is, that God is a much better judge of our character than we can possibly be, and that *his* regarding us as sinners is the highest proof that we *are* such, whatever may be *our* views to the contrary. This shows the extent of the confidence which Job had in God, and

righteous, *yet* would I not answer, *but* I would make supplication to my judge.

i c. 34. 31.

is an indication of true piety. And it is founded in *reason* as well as in *piety*. Men often suppose that they are righteous, and yet they know that God adjudges otherwise, and regards them as sinners. He offers them pardon as sinners. He threatens to punish them as sinners. The question is, whether they shall act on their own feelings and judgment in the case, or on his? Shall they adhere obstinately to their views, and refuse to yield to God, or shall they act on the truth of *his* declarations? Now that Job was right in his views of the case, may appear from the following considerations. (1.) God knows the heart. *He* cannot be deceived; *we* may be. In nothing are we more liable to be deceived than in regard to our own character. We should therefore distrust our own judgment in this case, but we should never distrust God. (2.) God is infinitely benevolent, and will not judge unkindly. He has no wish to find us sinners; he will have no pleasure in making us out to be transgressors. A heart of infinite benevolence would prefer to find all men holy, and would look on every favorable circumstance in the case with all the kindness which it would deserve. No being would be so likely to make a favorable decision in our case as the infinitely benevolent God; none would so delight to find that we were free from the charge of guilt. (3.) God will act on his own views of our character, and not on ours; and it is prudent and wise, therefore, for us to act on *his* views now. He will judge us in the last day according to *his* estimate of our character, and not according to the estimate which *we* may form. (4.) At the same time, we cannot but accord with *his* views of our own character. Our reason and conscience tell us that we have violated his laws, and that we have no claim to his mercy. No man can persuade himself that he is wholly righteous; and being conscious of guilt, though in the slightest

16 If I had called, and he had answered me, *yet* would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my voice.

17 For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause.

degree, he should make supplication to his Judge.

16. *If I had called, and he had answered me.* It is remarked by Schultens, that the expressions in these verses are all taken from courts of justice. If so, the meaning is, that even if Job should call the Almighty to a judicial action, and he should respond to him, and consent to submit the great question about his innocence, and about the justice of the divine dealings with him, to trial, yet that such was the distance between God and him, that he could not hope successfully to contend with him in the argument. He would therefore prostrate himself in a suppliant manner, and implore his mercy and compassion—submitting to him as having all power, and as being a just and righteous sovereign. ¶ *Would I not believe.* I cannot believe that he would enter into my complaint. He deals with me in a manner so severe, he acts towards me so much as a sovereign, that I have no reason to suppose that he would not continue to act towards me in the same way still.

17. *For he breaketh me.* He is overwhelming me with a tempest; that is, with the storms of wrath. He shows me no mercy. The idea seems to be, that God acted towards him, not as a judge, determining matters by rule of law, but as a sovereign, determining them by his own will. If it were a matter of law; if he could come before him as a judge, and maintain his cause there; if the case could be fairly adjudicated whether he deserved the calamities that came upon him, he would be willing to enter into such a trial. But where the matter was determined solely by will, and God acted as a sovereign, doing as he pleased, and giving no account of his matters to any one,

18 He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness.

19 If *I speak* of strength, lo, *he is strong*: and if of judgment, who shall set me a time to plead?

then it would be useless to argue the cause. He would not know what to expect, or understand the principles on which an adjudication would be made. It is true that God acts as a sovereign, but he does not act without reference to law. He dispenses his favors and his judgments as he pleases, but he violates none of the rules of right. The error of Job was the common error which men commit, that if God acts as a sovereign, he must of course act regardless of law, and that it is vain to plead with him or try to please him. But sovereignty is not necessarily inconsistent with respect for law; and He who presides with the most absolute power over the universe, is He who is most directed by the rule of right. In Him sovereignty and law coincide; and to come to Him as a sovereign, is to come with the assurance that supreme rectitude will be done. ¶ *And multiplieth my wounds without cause.* That is, without sufficient reason. This is in accordance with the views which Job had repeatedly expressed. The main ground of his complaint was, that his sufferings were disproportionate to his faults.

18. *He will not suffer me to take my breath.* See Notes on ch. vii. 19.

19. *If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong.* There has been a considerable variety in the interpretation of this passage: The meaning seems to be this. It refers to a judicial contest, and Job is speaking of the effect if he and God were to come to a trial, and the cause were to be settled before judges. He is urging reasons why he would have no hope of success in such a case. He says, therefore, "If the matter pertained only to strength, or if it were to be determined by strength, lo, he is more mighty than I am, and I could have no hope of success in such a controversy: and if the contro-

20 If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: *If*

versy was one of *judgment, i. e., of justice or right*, I have no one to manage my cause—no one that could cope with him in the pleadings—no one who could equal him in setting forth my arguments, or presenting my side of the case. It would, therefore, be wholly an unequal contest, where I could have no success; and I am unwilling to engage in such a controversy or trial with God. My interest, my duty, and the necessity of the case, require me to submit the case without argument, and I will not attempt to plead with my Maker." That there was a want of right feeling in this must be apparent to all. There was evidently the secret belief that God had dealt with him severely; that he had gone beyond his deserts in inflicting pain on him; and that he was under a necessity of submitting, not so much to justice and right, as to mere power and sovereignty. But who has not had something of this feeling when deeply afflicted? And yet who, when he has had it, has not felt that it was far from being what it should be? Our feeling *should* be, "we deserve all that we suffer, and more than we have yet endured. God is a sovereign; but He is right. Though he afflicts *us* much, and others *little*, yet it is not because he is unjust, but because he sees that there is some good reason why we should suffer. That reason may yet be seen by us, but if not, we should never doubt that it exists. ¶ *Who shall set me a time to plead?* Noyes renders this, "Who shall summon me to trial?" Dr. Good, "Who should become a witness for me?" The sense is, "Who would summon witnesses for me? If it were a mere trial of strength, God is too mighty for me; if it were a question of justice, who would compel witnesses to come on my side? Who could make them willing to appear against God, and to bear testimony for me in a controversy with the Almighty?"

20. *If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me.* That is, referring still to the form of a judicial trial, if I should undertake to manage my own

*I say, I am perfect*, it shall also prove me perverse.

cause, I should lay myself open to condemnation even in my argument on the subject, and should show that I was far from the perfection which I had undertaken to maintain. By passionate expressions; by the language of complaint and murmuring; by a want of suitable reverence; by showing my ignorance of the principles of the divine government; by arguments unsound and based on false positions; or by contradictions and self-refutations, I should show that my position was untenable, and that God was right in charging me with guilt. In some or in all of these ways Job felt, probably, that in an argument before God he would be self-condemned, and that even an attempt to justify himself, or to prove that he was innocent, would prove that he was guilty. And is it not always so? Did a man ever yet undertake to repel the charges of guilt brought against him by his Maker, and to prove that he was innocent, in which he did not himself show the truth of what he was denying? Did not his false views of God and of his law; his passion, murmuring, and irreverence; his unwillingness to admit the force of the palpable considerations urged to prove that he was guilty, demonstrate that he was at heart a sinner, and that he was insubmissive and rebellious? The very attempt to enter into such an argument against God shows that the heart is not right; and the manner in which such an argument is commonly conducted demonstrates that he who does it is sinful. ¶ *If I say, I am perfect.* Should I attempt to maintain such an argument, the very attempt would prove that my heart is perverse and evil. It would do this because God had adjudged the contrary, and because such an effort would show an insubmissive and a proud heart. This passage shows that Job did not regard himself as a man absolutely free from sin. He was indeed said (ch. i. 1) to be "perfect and upright;" but this verse proves that that testimony in regard to him was not inconsistent with his consciousness of guilt. See the



21 *Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul: I would despise my life.*

Notes on that verse. And is not the claim to absolute perfection in this world always a proof that the heart is perverse? Does not the very setting up of such a claim in fact indicate a pride of heart, a self-satisfaction, and an ignorance of the true state of the soul, which is full demonstration that the heart is far from being perfect? God adjudges man to be exceedingly sinful; and if I do not mistake the meaning of the Scriptures, this is his testimony of every human heart—*totally* until renewed—*partially* ever onward till death. If this be the account in the Scriptures, then the claim to absolute perfection is *prima facie*, if not full proof that the heart is in some way perverse. It has come to a different conclusion from that of God. It sets up an argument against him—and there can be no more certain proof of a want of perfection than such an attempt. There is in this verse an energy in the original which is very feebly conveyed by our translation. It is the language of strong and decided indignation at the very idea of asserting that he was perfect. *אני הֵאֵלָה*—“*perfect I!*” or “*I perfect!*” The thought is absurd! It can only prove that I am perverse to attempt to set up any such claim!” Stuhlman renders this,

“However good I may be, I must condemn myself;  
However free from guilt, I must call myself evil.”

and explains it as meaning, “God can, through the punishments which he inflicts, constrain me to confess, against the clear consciousness of my innocence, that I am guilty.”

21. *Though I were perfect.* The same mode of expression occurs here again. “*I perfect! I would not know it, or recognise it. If this were my view, and God judged otherwise, I would seem to be ignorant of it; I would not mention it.*” ¶ *Yet would I not know my soul.* Or, “*I could not know my soul. If I should advance such a claim,*

22 *This is one thing, therefore I said it, He<sup>k</sup> destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.*

k Eze. 21. 3.

it must be from my ignorance of myself.” Is not this true of all the claims to perfection which have ever been set up by man? Do they not demonstrate that he is ignorant of his own nature and character? So clear does this seem to me, that I have no doubt that Job expressed more than three thousand years ago what will be found true to the end of time—that if a man advances the claim to absolute perfection, it is conclusive proof that he does not know his own heart. A superficial view of ourselves, mingled with pride and vanity, may lead us to think that we are wholly free from sin. But who can tell what he would be if placed in other circumstances? Who knows what latent depravity would be developed if he were thrown into temptations? ¶ *I would despise my life.* Dr. Good, I think, has well expressed the sense of this. According to his interpretation, it means, that the claim of perfection would be in fact disowning all the consciousness which he had of sinfulness; all the arguments and convictions pressed on him by his reason and conscience, that he was a guilty man. Schultens, however, has given an interpretation which slightly differs from this, and one which Rosenmüller prefers. “Although I should be wholly conscious of innocence, yet that clear consciousness could not sustain me against the infinite splendour of the divine glory and majesty; but I should be compelled to appear ignorant of my own soul, and to reprobate, condemn, and despise my life passed with integrity and virtue.” This interpretation is in accordance with the connexion, and may be sustained by the Hebrew.

22. *This is one thing, therefore I said it.* This may mean, “it is all the same thing. It makes no difference whether a man be righteous or wicked. God treats them substantially alike; he has one and the same rule on the subject. Nothing can be argued certainly about

23 If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent.

24 The earth is given into the

the character of a man from the divine dealings with him here." This was the point in dispute, this the position that Job maintained—that God did *not* deal with men here in strict accordance with their character, but that the righteous and the wicked in this world were afflicted alike. ¶ *He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.* He makes no distinction among them. That Job was right in this, his main position, there can be no doubt; and the wonder is, that his friends did not all see it. But it required a long time in the course of events, and much observation and discussion, before this important point was made clear. With our full views of the state of retribution in the future world, we can have no doubt on the subject. Heavy and sudden judgments do not necessarily prove that they who are cut off are peculiarly guilty, and long prosperity is no evidence that a man is holy. Calamity, by fire and flood, on a steam-boat, or in the pestilence, does not demonstrate the peculiar and eminent wickedness of those who suffer, (comp. Luke xiii. 1—5,) nor should those who escape from such calamities infer that of necessity they are the objects of the divine favor.

23. *If the scourge slay suddenly.* If calamity comes in a sudden and unexpected manner. Dr. Good, following Reiske, translates this, "if he suddenly slay the oppressor," understanding the word *scourge* (עוֹד) as meaning an oppressor, or one whom God employs as a scourge of nations. But this is contrary to all the ancient versions. The word עוֹד means, properly, a whip, a scourge, (comp. Notes on ch. v. 21,) and then, calamity or affliction sent by God upon men. Such is clearly the case here. ¶ *He will laugh at the trial of the innocent.* That is, he seems to disregard or to be pleased with their trials. He does not interpose to rescue them. He seems to look calmly on, and suffers them to

hand of the wicked: he covereth the faces of the judges thereof, if not, where, *and* who is he?

be overwhelmed with others. This is a poetic expression, and cannot mean that God *derides* the trials of the innocent, or *mocks* their sufferings. It means, that he seems to be inattentive to them; he suffers the righteous and the wicked to be swept away together, as if he were regardless of character.

24. *The earth is given into the hand of the wicked.* This is evidently designed as an illustration of the sentiment that Job was maintaining—that there was not a distribution of rewards and punishments in this life according to character. In illustration of this, he says that the wicked are raised to places of trust and power. They exercise a wide dominion over the earth, and the world is under their control. Of the truth of this there can be no doubt. Rulers have been, in general, eminent for wickedness, and the affairs of nations have thus far been almost always under the control of those who are strangers to God. At the present time there is scarcely a pious man on any throne in the world, and the rulers of even Christian nations are in general eminent for anything rather than for personal religion. ¶ *He covereth the faces of the judges thereof.* There has been considerable variety in the exposition of this expression. Some suppose that it refers to the wicked, meaning, that they cover the faces of the judges under them so that they connive at and tolerate crime. Others, that it means that God blinds the eyes of wicked rulers, so that they connive at crime, and are partial and unjust in their decisions. Others, that it means that God covers the faces of the judges of the earth with shame and confusion, that though he admits them to prosperity and honor for a time, yet that he overwhelms them at length with calamities and sorrows. Dr. Good supposes it to mean, that the earth is given over into the hands of INJUSTICE, and that *this* hoodwinks the faces of the judges. The phrase properly means, to hoodwink, to

25 Now my days are swifter than a post: they flee away, they see no good.

blind, to conceal the face. It seems to me that the true sense is not expressed by either of the above views. The parallelism requires us to understand it as meaning, that while the wicked had dominion over the earth, the righteous were in obscurity, or were not advanced to honor and power. The word "*judges*," therefore, I think, is to be understood of the *righteous* judges, of those who are qualified to administer justice. Their face is covered. They are kept in concealment. The wicked have the sway, and they are doomed to shame, obscurity, and dishonor. This interpretation accords with the tenor of the argument, and may be sustained by the Hebrew, though I have not found it in any of the commentaries which I have consulted. ¶ *If not, where, and who is he?* If this is not a just view, who is God? What are his dealings? Where is he to be seen, and how is he to be known? Or it may mean, "if it is not God who does these strange things, who is it that does them?" *Rosenmüller*. But I prefer the former interpretation. "Tell me who and what God is, if this is not a fair and just account of him. These things, in fact, are done; and if the agency of God is not employed in them, who is God? And where is his agency seen?"

25. *Now my days are swifter than a post*. Than a courier, runner, or racer, *רץ*. Vulg., *cursore*; LXX., *δρομέως*, a racer. The word is not unfrequently applied to the runners or couriers that carried royal commands in ancient times. It is applied to the mounted couriers of the Persians who carried the royal edicts to the distant provinces, Est. iii. 13, 15; xviii. 14, and to the body-guard and royal messengers of Saul and of David, 1 Sam. xxii. 17; 2 Kings x. 25. The common rate of travelling in the East is exceedingly slow. The caravans move little more than two miles an hour. Couriers are, however, employed, who go

26 They are passed away as the<sup>1</sup> swift ships: as the eagle that hasteth to the prey.

<sup>1</sup> *ships of desire, or, ships of Ebeh.*

either on dromedaries, on horses, or on foot, and who travel with great rapidity. Lady Montague says, that "after the defeat at Peterwaradin, they [the couriers on dromedaries] far outran the fleetest horses, and brought the first news of the battle at Belgrade." The messengers in Barbary who carry despatches, it is said, will run one hundred and fifty miles in twenty-four hours, (*Harmer's Observa.* ii. 200, ed. 1808,) and it has been said that the messengers among the American savages would run an hundred and twenty miles in the twenty-four hours. In Egypt, it is a common thing for an Arab on foot to accompany a rider, and to keep up with the horse when at full gallop, and to do this for a long time without apparent fatigue. The meaning of Job here is, that his life was short, and that his days were passing swiftly away, not like the slow caravan, but like the most fleet messenger. Comp. Note, ch. vii. 6. ¶ *They see no good*. I am not permitted to enjoy happiness. My life is a life of misery.

26. *They are passed away as the swift ships*. Marg., *Ships of desire*; or *ships of Ebeh*. Heb. *אֲנִיּוֹת תִּשְׁתֶּה*. Vulg., *Naves poma portantes*. Sept., "Is there any track left by ships in their passage?" The Chaldee renders it as the Vulgate, "Ships bearing good fruit;" that is, as such fruit was perishable, haste was required in order to reach the place of destination. Our translators were evidently perplexed by the word *אֲנִיּוֹת*—*ebeh*, as appears by their placing two different phrases in the margin. "Ships of desire" denotes the value or *desirableness* of such ships; and the phrase, "Ships of Ebeh," denotes their confession of ignorance as to the meaning of the word. Gesenius explains the word to mean reed, bulrush, or papyrus—from an Arabic use of the word, and supposes that the reference is to the light vessels made of the papyrus,

27 If I say, I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my heaviness, and comfort *myself*:

28 I am afraid of all my sor-

which were used on the Nile. See Notes on Isa. xviii. 2. Such vessels would be distinguished for the ease with which they might be rowed, and the rapidity of their motion. Chardin supposes that the reference is to vessels that were made to go on the Euphrates or the Tigris, and that were borne along with the rapid current. The supposition of an allusion to any boat or vessel under full sail will be in accordance with the language here, though the probability is, that the reference is to the light vessels, made of reeds, that might be propelled with so much fleetness. Sails were frequently used, also, for such vessels. ¶ *As the eagle that hasteth to the prey.* A striking emblem of rapidity. Few things can be more rapid than the motion of the eagle as he darts upon his victim.

27. *If I say, I will forget my complaint.* If I resolve that I will leave off complaining, and will be more cheerful, I find it all in vain. My fears and sorrows return, and all my efforts to be cheerful are ineffectual. ¶ *I will leave off my heaviness.* The word rendered "my heaviness" here (פָּנַי) denotes literally *my face*; and the reference is to the sad and sorrowful countenance which he had. "If I should lay that aside, and endeavour to be cheerful." ¶ *And comfort myself.* The word rendered *comfort* here (נִצַּח), in Arabic means, to be bright, to shine forth; and it would here be better rendered by *brighten up*. We have the same expression still when we say to one who is sad and melancholy, "brighten up; be cheerful." The meaning here is, that Job endeavored to appear pleasant and cheerful, but it was in vain. His sorrows pressed heavily on him, and weighed down his spirits in spite of himself, and made him sad.

28. *I am afraid of all my sorrows.* My fears return. I dread the continu-

rows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.

29 *If I be wicked, why then labor I in vain?*

ance of my griefs, and cannot close my eye to them. ¶ *Thou wilt not hold me innocent.* God will not remove my sorrows so as to furnish the evidence that I am innocent. My sufferings continue, and with them continue all the evidence on which my friends rely that I am a guilty man. In such a state of things, how can I be otherwise than sad? He was held to be guilty; he was suffering in such a way as to afford them the proof that he was so, and how could he be cheerful?

29. *If I be wicked, why then labor I in vain?* The word "if," here introduced by our translators, greatly obscures the sense. The meaning evidently is, "I am held to be guilty, and cannot answer to that charge. God regards me as such, and if I should attempt to meet him on the charge, it would be a vain attempt; and I must admit its truth. It would be labor in vain to deny it against one so mighty as he is." This interpretation accords with the argument in the whole chapter. Job maintains that it would be in vain to contend with God, and he gives up the argument in despair. It is quite evident, however, that he does not do it so much because he is *convinced* himself, as because he knows that God is great, and that it would be useless to contend with him. There is evidently implied all along the feeling that if he was able to cope with God in the argument, the result would be different. As it is, he submits—not because he is *convinced*, but because he is *weak*; not because he sees that God is *right*, but because he sees that he is *powerful*. How much submission of this kind is there in the world—submission, not to *right*, but to *power*; submission to God, not because he is seen to be wise and good, but because he is seen to be almighty, and it is vain to attempt to oppose him! It is needless to say that such feelings evince no true submission.

30 If <sup>1</sup> I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean;

<sup>1</sup> Je. 2. 22.

30. *If I wash myself with snow water.* If I should make myself as pure as possible, and should become, in my view, perfectly holy. Snow water, it seems, was regarded as peculiarly pure. The whiteness of snow itself perhaps suggested the idea that the water of melted snow was better than other for purification. Washing the hands formerly was an emblem of cleansing from guilt. Hence Pilate, when he gave up the Saviour to death, took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, and said that he was innocent of his blood. Matth. xxvii. 24. The expression here used by Job is also imitated by the Psalmist, to denote his innocence:

I will wash mine hands in innocency:  
So will I compass thine altar, O Lord.  
Ps. xxvi. 6.

Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain,  
And washed my hands in innocency.  
Ps. lxxiii. 18.

So in Shakspeare, Richard III.:

"How fain, like Pilate, would I wash my hands  
Of this most grievous, guilty murder done!"

¶ *And make my hands never so clean.* Or, rather, should I cleanse my hands with ley, or alkali. The word *בֹר*, *bor*, means, properly, purity, cleanliness, pureness; and then it is used to denote that which cleanses, alkali, ley, or vegetable salt. The ancients made use of this, mingled with oil, instead of soap, for the purpose of washing, and also in smelting metals, to make them melt more readily. See Notes on Isa. i. 25. The Chaldee renders it accurately, *in soap*. I have no doubt that this is the sense, and that Job means to say, if he should make use of the purest water and of soap to cleanse himself, still he would be regarded as impure. God would throw him at once into the ditch, and he would be covered with moral filth and defilement again in his sight.

31. *Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch.* God would treat me as if he

31 Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall <sup>1</sup> abhor me.

<sup>1</sup> make me to be abhorred.

should throw me into the gutter, and as if I were wholly defiled and polluted. The meaning is, God would not admit the proofs which I should adduce of my innocence, but would overwhelm me with the demonstrations of my guilt. I doubt not that Job urged this with some degree of impatience, and with some improper feelings. He felt, evidently, that God was so great and powerful, that it was vain to contend with him. But it is true in a higher and more important sense than he seems to have understood it. After all the efforts which we can make to justify, vindicate, or purify ourselves, it is in the power of God to overwhelm us with the *consciousness* of guilt. He has access to the heart. He can show us our past sins. He can recall what we have forgotten, and overwhelm us with the remembrance of our deep depravity. It is in vain, therefore, for any man to attempt to justify himself before God. After the most labored argument to prove his own innocence; after all the confidence which he can repose in his own morality and his own righteousness, still God can with infinite ease overwhelm him with the consciousness of guilt. How many men that were once relying on their own morality for their salvation, have been bowed down with a consciousness of guilt in a revival of religion! How many who have been trusting to their own righteousness have been overwhelmed with deep and awful conviction, when they have been brought to lie on a bed of death! Let no man, therefore, rely on his own righteousness, when God accuses him with being a sinner. Let no one trust to his own morality for salvation—for soon it will all be seen to be insufficient, and the soul must appear covered over with the consciousness of guilt at the awful bar of God. ¶ *And mine own clothes shall abhor me.* Marg., *Make me to be abhorred.* That is, they shall be filthy and offensive—like one who

32 For *he* is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment.

has been rolled in the mire. God has power to make me seem defiled and loathsome, notwithstanding all my efforts to cleanse myself.

32. For he is not a man, as I am. He is infinitely superior to me in majesty and power. The idea is, that the contest would be unequal, and that he might as well surrender without bringing the matter to an issue. It is evident that the disposition of Job to yield, was rather because he saw that God was superior in power than because he saw that he was right, and that he felt that if he had ability to manage the cause as well as God could, the matter would not be so much against him as it was then. That there was no little impropriety of feeling in this, no one can doubt; but have we never had feelings like this when we have been afflicted? Have we never submitted to God because we felt that he was Almighty, and that it was vain to contend with him, rather than because he was seen to be right? True submission is always accompanied with the belief that God is right—whether we can see him to be right or not. ¶ And we should come together in judgment. For trial, to have the case adjudicated. That is, that we should meet face to face, and have the cause tried before a superior judge. *Noyes.*

33. Neither is there any daysman. Marg., One that should argue, or, umpire. The word *daysman* in English means, "an umpire or arbiter, a mediator." Webster. Why such a man is called a *daysman* I do not know. The Hebrew word rendered *daysman* (מִשְׁפָּט) is from מָשַׁפַּ, not used in Kal, to be before, in front of; and then, to appear, to be clear, or manifest; and in Hiphil, to cause to be manifest, to argue, prove, convince; and then, to argue down, to confute, reprove. See the word used in ch. vi. 25: "What doth your arguing reprove?" It then means, to make a cause

33 Neither is there <sup>1</sup>any <sup>2</sup>daysman betwixt <sup>m</sup> us, that might lay his hand upon us both.

<sup>1</sup> one that should argue. <sup>2</sup> or, umpire.  
m Ps. 106. 23.

clear, to judge, determine, decide, as an arbiter, umpire, judge, Isa. xi. 3. Gen. xxxi. 37. Jerome renders it, "Non est qui utrumque valeat arguere." The LXX, "if there were, or, O that there were a mediator (ὁ μεσίτης), and a prover (καὶ ἐλέγχων), and one to hear us both" (καὶ διακούων ἀναμέσον ἀφορτέρων). The word, as used by Job, does not mean mediator, but *arbiter, umpire, or judge*; one before whom the cause might be tried, who could lay the hand of restraint on either party, who could confine the pleadings within proper bounds, who could preserve the parties within the limits of order and propriety, and who had power to determine the question at issue. Job complains that there could be no such tribunal. He feels that God was so great that the cause could be referred to no other, and that he had no prospect of success in the unequal contest. It does not appear, therefore, that he desired a *mediator*, in the sense in which we understand that word—one who shall come between us and God, and manage our cause *before* him, and be our advocate at his bar. He rather says that there was no one *above* God, or no umpire uninterested in the controversy, before whom the cause could be argued, and who would be competent to decide the matter in issue between him and his Maker. He had no hope, therefore, in a cause where one of the parties was to be the judge, and where that party was omnipotent; and he must give up the cause in despair. It is not with strict propriety that this language is ever applied to the Lord Jesus, the great Mediator between God and man. He is not an umpire to settle a dispute, in the sense in which Job understood it; he is not an arbiter, to whom the cause in dispute between man and his Maker is to be referred; he is not a judge to listen to the arguments of the respective parties, and to decide the controversy. He is a *mediator* be-

34 Let him take <sup>n</sup> his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrify me:

<sup>n</sup> Ps. 39. 10.

tween us and God, to make it proper or possible that God should be reconciled to the guilty, and to propose to man the terms of reconciliation; to plead our cause before God, and to communicate to us the favours which he proposes to bestow on man. ¶ *That might lay his hand upon us both.* It is not improbable that this may refer to some ancient ceremony in courts where, for some cause, the umpire or arbiter laid his hand on both the parties. Or, it may mean merely that the umpire had the power of control over both the parties; that it was his office to restrain them within proper limits, to check any improper expressions, and to see that the argument was fairly conducted on both sides. The meaning of the whole here is, that if there were such an umpire, Job would be willing to argue the cause. As it was, it was a hopeless thing, and he could do nothing more than be silent. That there was irreverence in this language must be admitted; but it is language taken from courts of law, and the substance of it is, that Job could not hope to maintain his cause before one so great and powerful as God.

34. *Let him take his rod away from me.* Let him suspend my sufferings, and let us come together on equal terms. His terror now is upon me, and I can do nothing. I am oppressed, and broken down, and crushed under his hand, and I could not hope to maintain my cause with any degree of success. If my sufferings were lightened, and I could approach the question with the vigor of health and the power of reasoning unweakened by calamity, I could then do justice to the views which I entertain. Now there would be obvious disparity, while one of the parties has crushed and enervated the other by the mere exercise of power.

35. *Then would I speak, and not fear him.* I should then be able to maintain my cause on equal terms, and with equal advantages. ¶ *But it is not so with me.*

35 *Then* would I speak, and not fear him; but <sup>1</sup> *it is not so with me.*

<sup>1</sup> *I am not so with myself.*

Marg., *I am not so with myself.* Noyes, "I am not so at heart." Good, "but not thus could I in my present state." Literally, "for not thus I with myself." The Syriac renders it, "for neither am I his adversary." Very various interpretations have been given of this phrase. The Jews, with Aben Ezra, suppose it means, "for I am not such as you suppose me to be. You take me to be a guilty man, but I am innocent; and if I had a fair opportunity for trial, I could show that I am." Others suppose it to mean, "I am held to be guilty by the Most High, and am treated accordingly. But I am not so. I am conscious to myself that I am innocent." It seems to me that Dr. Good has come nearer the true sense than any other interpreter, and certainly his exposition accords with the connexion. According to this the meaning is, "I am not able thus to vindicate myself in my present circumstances. I am oppressed and crushed beneath a load of calamities. But if these were removed, and if I had a fair opportunity of trial, then I could so state my cause as to make it appear to be just." In this whole chapter, there is evidently much insubmission and improper feeling. Job submits to *power*, not to *truth* and *right*. He sees and admits that God is *able* to overwhelm him, but he does not seem disposed to admit that he is *right* in doing it. He supposes that if he had a fair and full opportunity of trial, he could make his cause good, and that it would be seen that he did not deserve his heavy calamities. There is much of this kind of submission to God even among good people. It is submission because they cannot help it, not because they see the divine dealings to be right. There is nothing cheerful or confiding about it. There is often a secret feeling in the heart that the sufferings are beyond the deserts, and that if the case could be fairly tried, the dealings of God would be found to be harsh and severe. Let

us not blame Job for his impatience and irreverent language, until we have carefully examined our own hearts in the times of trial like those which he endured. Let us not infer that he was

worse than other men, until *we* are placed in similar circumstances, and are able to manifest better feelings than he did.

## CHAPTER X.

**M**Y soul is <sup>1</sup> weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

2 I will say unto God, Do not <sup>a</sup> condemn me; shew me where-

<sup>1</sup> or, cut off while I live. a Ps. 143. 2. Ro. 8. 1.

1. *My soul is weary of my life.* Comp. Notes on ch. vii. 16. The margin here is, Or, cut off while I live. The meaning in the margin is in accordance with the interpretation of Schultens. The Chaldee also renders it in a similar way: נַפְשִׁי אֶתְקַטַּר—*my soul is cut off*. But the more correct interpretation is that in our common version; and the sense is, that his soul, *i. e.*, that he himself, was disgusted with life. It was a weary burden, and he wished to die. ¶ *I will leave my complaint upon myself.* Noyes, "I will give myself up to complaint." Dr. Good, "I will let loose from myself my dark thoughts." The literal sense is, "I will leave complaint upon myself;" that is, I will give way to it; I will not restrain it. Comp. ch. vii. 11. ¶ *I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.* See Notes, ch. vii. 11.

2. *I will say unto God, Do not condemn me.* Do not hold me to be wicked—אֵל הָרָשָׁעִי. The sense is, "Do not simply hold me to be wicked, and treat me as such, without showing me the reasons why I am so regarded." This was the ground of Job's complaint, that God by mere sovereignty and power held him to be a wicked man, and that he did not see the reasons why he was so considered and treated. He now desired to know in what he had offended, and to be made acquainted with the cause of

fore <sup>b</sup> thou contendest with me.

3 *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the <sup>2</sup> work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?*

<sup>b</sup> La. 5. 16, 17.

<sup>2</sup> labor.

his sufferings. The idea is, that it was unjust to treat one as guilty who had no opportunity of knowing the nature of the offence with which he was charged, or the reason why he was condemned.

3. *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldst oppress.* The sense of this is, that it could not be with God a matter of personal gratification to inflict pain wantonly. There *must* be a reason why he did it. This was clear to Job, and he was anxious, therefore, to know the reason why he was treated in this manner. Yet there is evidently here not a little of the spirit of complaining. There is an insinuation that God was afflicting him beyond what he deserved. See ver. 7. The state of his mind appears to have been this: he is conscious to himself that he is a sincere friend of God, and he is unwilling to believe that God can wantonly indict pain—and yet he has no other way of accounting for it. He is in a sort driven to this painful conclusion—and he asks with deep feeling, whether it *can* be so? Is there no *other* solution than this? Is there no way of explaining the fact that he suffers so much, than either the supposition that he is a hypocrite—which he feels assured he is not; or that God took a wanton pleasure in inflicting pain—which he was as little disposed to believe, if he could avoid it? Yet his mind *rather* verges to this latter belief,



4 Hast thou eyes of flesh? or  
 c seest thou as man seeth?

5 Are thy days as the days of  
 man? are thy years as man's  
 days,

6 That d thou enquirest after

c 1 Sa. 16. 7.

d Jno. 2. 24, 25.

for he seems more disposed to believe that God was severe than that he himself was a hypocrite and a wicked man. Neither of these conclusions was necessary. If he had taken a middle ground, and had adverted to the fact that *God might afflict his own children for their good*, the mystery would have been solved. He could have retained the consciousness of his integrity, and, at the same time, his confidence in God. ¶ *That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands.* Marg., labor. That is, despise man, or treat him as if he were of no value. The idea is, that it would be natural for God to love his own work, and that his treatment of Job seemed as if he regarded his own workmanship—man, as of no value. ¶ *And shine upon the counsel of the wicked?* By giving them health and prosperity.

4. *Hast thou eyes of flesh?* Eyes like man. Dost thou look upon man with the same disposition to discern faults; the same uncharitableness and inclination to construe everything in the severest manner possible, which characterizes man? Possibly Job may have reference here to the harsh judgment of his friends, and means to ask whether it could be possible for God to evince the same feelings in judging of him which they had done.

5. *Are thy days as the days of man?* Does thy life pass on like that of man? Dost thou expect soon to die, that thou dost pursue me in this manner, searching out my sins, and afflicting me as if there were no time to lose? The idea is, that God seemed to press this matter as if he were soon to cease to exist, and as if there were no time to spare in accomplishing it. His strokes were unintermitted, as if it were necessary that the work should be done soon, and as if no respite could be given for a full and

mine iniquity, and searchest e  
 after my sin?

7 1 Thou knowest f that I am  
 not wicked; and there is none  
 that can deliver out of thine  
 hand.

e Ps. 10. 15.

f It is upon thy knowledge. f Jno. 21. 17.

fair development of the real character of the sufferer. The whole passage (ver. 4—7) expresses the settled conviction of Job that God *could not* resemble man. Man was short-lived, fickle, blind; he was incapable, from the brevity of his existence, and from his imperfections, of judging correctly of the character of others. But it could not be so with God. He was eternal. He knew the heart. He saw everything as it was. Why, then, Job asks, with deep feeling, did he deal with him as if he were influenced by the methods of judgment which were inseparable from the condition of imperfect and dying man?

6. *That thou enquirest after mine iniquity.* Art thou governed by human passions and prejudices, that thou dost thus seem to search out every little obliquity and error? Job here evidently refers to the conduct of man in strictly marking faults, and in being unwilling to forgive; and he asks whether it is possible that God could be governed by such feelings as these.

7. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* That is, that I am not a hypocrite, or an impenitent sinner. Job did not claim perfection, (see Notes on ch. ix. 20,) but he maintained through all this argument that he was not a wicked man, in the sense in which his friends regarded him as such, and for the truth of this he could boldly appeal to God. The margin is, "It is upon thy knowledge." This is a literal translation of the Hebrew, but the sense is well expressed in the text. The meaning of the verse is, "Why dost thou thus afflict me, when thou knowest that I am not wicked? Why am I treated as if I were the worst of men? Why is occasion thus furnished for my friends to construct an argument as if I were a man of singular depravity?" There is

8 Thine hands <sup>1</sup> have made me, and fashioned me together round about; yet thou dost destroy me.

<sup>1</sup> took pains about me.

none that can deliver out of thine hand. I have no power to release myself. Job felt that God had almighty power; and he seems to have felt that his sufferings were rather the simple exertion of power, than the exercise of justice. It was this that laid the foundation for his complaint.

8. *Thine hands have made me.* Job proceeds now to state that he had been made by God, and that he had shown great skill and pains in his formation. He argues, that it would seem like caprice to take such pains, and to exercise such amazing wisdom and care in forming him, and then on a sudden, and without cause, dash his own work to pieces. Who makes a beautiful vase only to be destroyed? Who moulds a statue from marble only to break it to pieces? Who builds a splendid edifice only to pull it down? Who plants a rare and precious flower only to have the pleasure of plucking it up? The statement in ver. 8—12, is not only beautiful and forcible as an argument, but is peculiarly interesting and valuable, as it may be presumed to embody the views in the patriarchal age about the formation and the laws of the human frame. No inconsiderable part of the value of the book of Job, as was remarked in the Introduction, arises from the incidental notices of the sciences as they prevailed at the time when it was composed. If it is the oldest book in the world, it is an invaluable record on these points. The expression, "thine hands have made me," is, in the margin, "*took pains about me.*" Dr. Good renders it, "have wrought me;" Noyes, "completely fashioned me;" Rosenmüller explains it to mean, "have formed me with the highest diligence and care." Schultens renders it, *Manus tuæ nervis colligavit*—"thy hands have bound me with nerves or sinews;" and appeals to the use of the Arabic as authority for this interpretation. He maintains (*De De-*

9 Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; <sup>2</sup> and wilt thou bring me into dust again?

g Je. 18. 6. Ro. 9. 21.

fectibus hodiernis Ling. Hebr. pp. 142,

144, 151), that the Arabic word *عز* *atzaba*, denotes "the body united and bound in a beautiful form by nerves and tendons;" and that the idea here is, that God had so constructed the human frame. The Hebrew word here used (*עצב*) means, properly, to work, form, fashion. The primary idea, according to Gesenius, is, that of *cutting*, both wood and stone, and hence to cut or carve with a view to the forming of an image. The verb also has the idea of labor, pain, travail, grief; perhaps from the labor of cutting or carving a stone or a block of wood. Hence it means, in Piel, to form or fashion, with the idea of labor or toil; and the sense here is undoubtedly, that God had *elaborated* the bodies of men with care and skill, like that bestowed on a carved image or statue. The margin expresses the idea not badly—*took pains about me.* ¶ *And fashioned me.* Made me. The Hebrew here means simply to make. ¶ *Together round about.* יחד קבץ. Vulg., *totum in circuitu*. Sept. simply, "*made me.*" Dr. Good, "moulded me compact on all sides." The word יחד rendered "together," has the notion of *oneness*, or *union*. It may refer to the *oneness* of the man—the making of *one* from the apparently discordant materials, and the compact form in which the body, though composed of bones, and sinews, and blood-vessels, is constructed. A similar idea is expressed by Lucretius, as quoted by Schultens. Lib. iii. 358:

" — Qui cœtu conjungitque  
Corporis atque animæ consistimus uniter apti."

¶ *Yet thou dost destroy me.* Notwithstanding I am thus made, yet thou art taking down my frame, as if it were of no consequence, and formed with no care.

9. *Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay.* There is evident allusion here to the creation of man,

10 Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese?

and to the fact that he was moulded from the dust of the earth—a fact which would be preserved by tradition. See Gen. ii. 7. The fact that God had moulded the human form as the potter moulds the clay, is one that is often referred to in the Scriptures. Comp. Rom. ix. 20, 21. The *object* of Job in this is, probably, to recall the fact that God, out of clay, had formed the noble structure, *man*, and to ask whether it was his intention to reduce that structure again to its former worthless condition—to destroy its beauty, and to efface the remembrance of his workmanship? Was it becoming God thus to blot out every memorial of his own power and skill in moulding the human frame?

10. *Hast thou not poured me out as milk?* The whole image in this verse and the following, is designed to furnish an illustration of the origin and growth of the human frame. The note of Dr. Good may be transcribed, as furnishing an illustration of what may have possibly been the meaning of Job. "The whole of the simile is highly correct and beautiful, and has not been neglected by the best poets of Greece and Rome. From the well-tempered or mingled milk of the chyle, every individual atom of every individual organ in the human frame, the most compact and consolidated, as well as the soft and pliable, is perpetually supplied and renewed, through the medium of a system of *lacteals* or *milk-vessels*, as they are usually called in anatomy, from the nature of this common chyle or milk which they circulate. Into the delicate stomach of the infant it is introduced in the form of milk; but even in the adult it must be reduced to some such form, whatever be the substance he feed upon, by the conjoint action of the stomach and other chylofactive organs, before it can become the basis of animal nutri-

11 Thou<sup>b</sup> hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast<sup>1</sup> fenced me with bones and sinews.

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 139. 13.

<sup>1</sup> *hedged*.

ment. It then circulates through the system, and either continues fluid, as milk in its simple state, or is rendered solid, as milk is in its caseous or cheese-state, according to the nature of the organ which it supplies with its vital current." True as this is, however, as a matter of physiology, now well understood, a doubt may arise whether Job was acquainted with the method thus described, in which man is sustained. The idea of Job is, that God was the author of the human frame, and that that frame was so formed as to evince his wonderful and incomprehensible wisdom. A consultation of the works on physiology, which explain the facts about the formation and the growth of the human body, will show that there are few things which more strikingly evince the wisdom of God than the formation of the human frame, alike at its origin and in every stage of its development. It is a subject, however, which cannot, with propriety, be pursued in a work of this kind.

11. *Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh.* This refers, undoubtedly, to the formation of man in his foetal existence, and is designed to denote that the whole organization of the human frame was to be traced to God. Grotius remarks that this is the order in which the infant is formed—that the skin appears first, then the flesh, then the harder parts of the frame. On this subject, the reader may consult Duglison's *Physiology*, vol. ii. p. 340, seq. ¶ *And hast fenced me.* Marg., *Hedged*. Literally, *Hast covered me*. The sense is plain. God had formed him as he was, and to him he owed his life, and all that he had. Job asks with the deepest interest whether God would take down a frame formed in this manner, and reduce it again to dust? Would it not be more for his honor to preserve it still—at least to the common limit of human life?

12 Thou hast granted me life and favor, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.

13 And these *things* hast thou hid in thine heart: I know that

12. *Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.* Thy constant care; thy watchful providence; thy superintendence. The word rendered *visitation* (פָּקַד) means, properly, the *mustering* of an army, the care that is manifested in looking after those who are enlisted; and then denotes care, vigilance, providence, custody, watch. The idea is, that God had watched over him and preserved him, and that to his constant vigilance he owed the preservation of his life.

13. *And these things hast thou hid in thine heart.* This may either refer to the arrangements by which God had made him, or to the calamities which he had brought upon him. Most expositors suppose that the latter is intended. Such is the opinion of Rosenmüller, Good, Noyes, and Scott. According to this, the idea is, that God had purposed in his heart to bring these calamities upon him. They were a part of his counsel and design. To hide in the heart, or to lay up in the heart, is a phrase expressive of a secret purpose. I see no reason to confine it, however, to the calamities which Job had experienced. It may refer to *all* the plans and doings of the Most High, to which Job had just referred. *All* his acts in the creation and preservation of man were a part of his secret counsel. He had formed the plan in his heart, and was now executing it in the various dispensations of his providence. ¶ *I know that this is with thee.* That all this is a part of thy purpose. It has its origin in thee, and is according to thy counsel. This is the language of piety, recognising the great truth that all things are in accordance with the purposes of God, or that his plans embrace all events—a doctrine which Job most assuredly held.

14. *If I sin.* The object of this verse and the following is, evidently, to say

this is with thee.

14 If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.

that he was wholly perplexed. He did not know how to act. He could not understand the reason of the divine dealings, and he was wholly unable to explain them, and hence he did not know how to act in a proper manner. It is expressive of a state of mind where the individual *wishes* to think and feel right, but where he finds so much to perplex him, that he does not know what to do. Job was sure that his friends were not right in the position which they maintained—that he was a sinner of enormous character, and that his sufferings were proof of this, and yet he did not know how to answer their arguments. He desired to have confidence in God, and yet he knew not how to reconcile his dealings with his sense of right. He felt that he was a friend of God, and he did not know why he should visit one who had this consciousness in this distressing and painful manner. His mind was perplexed, vacillating, embarrassed, and he did not know what to do or say. The truth in this whole argument was, that he was more often right than his friends, but that he, in common with them, had embraced some principles which he was compelled to admit to be true, or which he could not demonstrate to be false, which gave them greatly the advantage in the argument, and which they pressed upon him now with overwhelming force. ¶ *Then thou markest me.* Dost carefully observe every fault. *Why* he did this, Job could not see. The same difficulty he expressed in ch. vii. 17—19. See the Notes on that place. ¶ *And thou wilt not acquit me.* Wilt not pardon me. Job did not understand why God would not do this. It was exceedingly perplexing to him that God held him to be guilty, and would not pardon him if he had sinned. The same perplexity he expressed in ch. vii. 21. See Notes on that verse.

15 If I be wicked, woe<sup>i</sup> unto me; and *if* I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head. *I am* full of confusion; therefore see thou mine affliction;

<sup>i</sup>Is. 6. 5.

15. *If I be wicked, woe unto me.* The meaning of this in this connexion is, "I am full of perplexity and sorrow. Whether I am wicked or righteous, I find no comfort. Whatever is my character, my efforts to be happy are unavailing, and my mind is full of anguish. Woe follows if I have been guilty of sin; and if I am not a sinful man, I am equally incapable of enjoyment. In every way I am doomed to wretchedness. ¶ And if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head. That is, with confidence and cheerfulness. The meaning is, that though he was conscious that he was not a hypocrite, yet he did not know what to do. God treated him as if he were wicked, and his friends regarded him as such, and he was overwhelmed with the perplexities of his situation. He could not lift up his head with confidence, though he was certain that he was not a sinner in the sense in which they charged him with being such; and yet, since he was treated by God in a manner so similar to the mode in which the wicked are treated, he felt ashamed and confounded. Who has not felt the same thing? Who has not experienced a sense of shame and mortification at being *sick*,—a proof of guilt, and an expression of the hatred of God against sin? Who has not felt *humbled* that he must die, as the most vile of the race must die, and that his body must become the "prey of corruption" and "the banquet of worms," as a demonstration of guilt? Such humiliation Job experienced. He was treated as if he were the vilest of sinners. He endured from God sufferings such as they endure. He was so regarded by his friends. He felt humbled and mortified that he was brought into this situation, and was ashamed that he could not meet the arguments of his friends. ¶ I am full of confusion. Shame, ignominy, distress, and perplexity. On every side

16 For it increaseth. Thou huntest me as a fierce lion:<sup>k</sup> and again thou shewest thyself marvellous upon me.

<sup>k</sup>La. 3. 10. Hos. 13. 7, 8.

there was embarrassment, and he knew not what to do. His friends regarded him as vile, and he could not but admit that he was so treated by God. ¶ *Therefore, see thou mine affliction.* The word rendered here "*see*" (ראה) in the imperative, Rosenmüller, Gesenius, and others suppose should be regarded as in the infinitive absolute, the finite verb being understood; "seeing I see my affliction, that is, I certainly see it." So the Chaldee and the Syriac render it, and this agrees better with the connection of the passage. "I see the depth of my affliction. I cannot hide it from myself. I see, and must admit, that God treats me *as if* I were a sinner, and I am greatly perplexed and embarrassed by that fact. My mind is in confusion, and I know not what to say."

15. *For it increaseth.* Our translators understand this as meaning that the calamities of Job, so far from becoming less, were constantly increasing, and thus augmenting his perplexity and embarrassment. But a somewhat different explanation is given to it by many interpreters. The word rendered "increaseth" (רָבַח) means, properly, to lift up, to lift up oneself, to rise; and Gesenius supposes that it refers here to the head, and that the meaning is, "if it lift up itself, (sc. my head,) thou huntest me as a lion." It cannot be denied that the notion of pride, elation, haughtiness, is usually connected with the use of the word, but it is not necessary here to depart from the common interpretation, meaning, that the increase of his affliction greatly augmented his perplexity. Jerome, however, renders it, "and on account of pride thou dost seize me as a lioness." The idea is, "my affliction, as it were, *exalts itself*, or, becomes more and more prominent." This is a better interpretation than to refer it to the raising up of his head. ¶ *Thou huntest*

17 Thou renewest thy <sup>1</sup> witnesses against me, and increasest thine indignation upon me; changes and war are against me.

18 Wherefore then hast thou

<sup>1</sup> that is, *plagues*.

*me as a fierce lion.* On the meaning of the word here rendered "fierce lion" (לָהֹטֵא, *shākhāl*), see Notes on ch. iv. 10. The sense here is, that God hunted or followed him as a fierce lion pursued his prey. ¶ *And again thou shewest thyself marvellous.* Or rather, "thou turnest, and art wonderful towards me." The meaning is, that he did not at once spring upon his prey and then leave it, but he came back as if it had not been put to death when first seized, as if a lion should come back and torture his victim again. The meaning of the phrase, "showest thyself marvellous" is, that the dealings of God towards him were wonderful. They were wholly incomprehensible. He had no means of finding out the reasons of his doings. On the word here used, comp. Notes on Isa. ix. 6.

17. *Thou renewest thy witnesses against me.* Marg. "that is, *plagues*." The Hebrew is, *thy witnesses*—לְעֵדֶיךָ. So the Vulgate. The LXX is, "renewing against me my examination," *τήν ἐξαγωγήν μου*. Rabbi Levi supposes that the plague of the leprosy is intended. But the true meaning seems to be, that God sent upon him calamities which were regarded by his friends as *proofs* or *witnesses* that he was wicked, the public and solemn attestation of God, as they supposed, to the truth that he was eminently a bad man. New proofs of this kind were constantly occurring in his augmenting and protracted sorrows, and he could not answer the arguments which were brought from them by his friends. ¶ *Changes and war are against me.* Or rather, *are with me*, עִמָּי. There were with him such reverses of condition as laid the foundation for the argument which they had urged with so much pertinacity and force that he was punished by God. The word rendered *changes* (שִׁנּוּתִים), means properly *changes*,

brought me forth out of the womb? Oh <sup>1</sup> that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!

19 I should have been as though

<sup>1</sup> c. 3. 11.

or exchanges, and is applied to garments, 2 Kings v. 5, 22, 23. It may be used also of soldiers keeping watch until they are relieved by a succeeding guard. See Note on ch. xiv. 14. Here it is not improbably employed in the sense of a *succession* of attacks made on him. One succeeds another, as if platoon after platoon, to use the modern terms, or phalanx after phalanx, should come up against him. As soon as one had discharged its arrows, another succeeded in its place; or as soon as one became exhausted, it was followed by a fresh recruit. All this Job could not endure. The *succession* wearied him, and he could not bear it. Dr. Good supposes that the word refers to the skirmishes by which a battle is usually introduced, in which two armies attempt to gall each other before they are engaged. But the true idea, as it seems to me, is, that afflictions succeeded each other as soldiers on a watch, or in a battle, relieve each other. When one set is exhausted on duty, it is succeeded by another. Or, when in battle one company has discharged its weapons, or is exhausted, it is succeeded by those who are brought fresh into the field. The word rendered "war" (מִלְחָמָה) properly means an army or a host. See Note, ch. vii. 1. Here it means that a whole *host* had rushed upon him. Not only had he been galled by the *succession*, the *relief-guard* of calamities, the attacks which had followed each other from an advanced guard, or from scouts sent out to skirmish, but the *whole army* was upon him. A whole host of calamities came rushing upon him alone, and he could not endure them.

18. *Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth.* See Notes on ch. iii. 11.

19. *I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.* See Notes on ch. iii. 16.

I had not been; I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.

20 *Are not my days few?* <sup>m</sup> cease *then*, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little,

21 Before I go *whence* I shall

*m* Ps. 39. 5. 13.

20. *Are not my days few?* My life is short, and hastens to a close. Let not then my afflictions be continued to the last moment of life, but let thine hand be removed, that I may enjoy some rest before I go hence to return no more. This is an address to God, and the meaning is, that as life was necessarily so short, he asked to be permitted to enjoy some comfort before he should go to the land of darkness and of death. Comp. Note on ch. vii. 21. A somewhat similar expression occurs in Ps. xxxix. 13:

O spare me, that I may recover strength,  
Before I go hence, and be no more.

21. *Before I go whence I shall not return.* To the grave, to the land of shades, to

"That undiscovered country, from whose bourne

No traveller returns."

¶ *To the land of darkness.* This passage is important as furnishing an illustration of what was early understood about the regions of the dead. The essential idea here is, that it was a land of *darkness*, of total and absolute night. This idea Job presents in a great variety of forms and phrases. He amplifies it, and uses apparently all the epithets which he can command to represent the *utter* and *entire* darkness of the place. The place referred to is not the grave, but the region beyond, the abode of departed spirits, the Hades of the ancients; and the idea here is, that it is a place where not a clear ray of light ever shines. That this was a common opinion of the ancients in regard to the world of departed spirits, is well known. Virgil thus speaks of those gloomy regions:

"Dil, quibus imperium est animarum, umbræque silentes;

Et Chaos, et Phlegethon, loca nocte tacentia latè,

not return, *even* to the land <sup>a</sup> of darkness and the <sup>o</sup> shadow of death;

22 A land of darkness, as darkness *itself*; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and *where* the light is as darkness.

*n* Ps. 88. 12.

*o* Ps. 23. 4.

Sit mihi fas audita loqui, sit numine vestro  
Pandere res alta terra et caligine mersas.  
Ibant obscuro sola sub nocte per umbram,  
Perque domos Ditis vacuas, et inania regna.  
Quale per incerta Lunam sub luce maligna  
Est iter in sylvis; ubi cælum condidit umbra  
Jupiter, et rebus nox abstulit atra colorem."  
ÆN. vi. 239, seq.

A similar view of Hades was held by the Greeks. Thus *Theognis*, 1007:

Ὅς μῆκαρ εὐδαίμων τε καὶ ὄλβιος, ὅστις ἄπειρος  
"Αἰθῶν, εἰς ἄδου δῶμα μέλαν κατέβη.

There is nowhere to be found, however, a description which for intensity and emphasis of expression surpasses this of Job. ¶ *Shadow of death.* See this phrase explained in the Note on ch. iii. 5.

22. *A land of darkness.* The word here used (הַחֹשֶׁךְ) is different from that rendered *darkness* (חָשֶׁךְ) in the previous verse. That is the common word to denote darkness; this seldom occurs. It is derived from חָפַץ, to fly; and then to cover as with wings; and hence the noun means that which is shaded or dark. Amos iv. 13. Comp. Job xi. 17; Isa. viii. 22; ix. 1. ¶ *As darkness itself.* This is still another word (עָמָק), though in our common version but one term is used. We have not the means in our language of marking different degrees of obscurity with the accuracy with which the Hebrews did it. The word here used (עָמָק) denotes a *thick* darkness—such as exists when the sun is set—from חָפַץ, to go down, to set. It is poetic, and is used to denote intense and deep darkness. See ch. iii. 6. ¶ *And of the shadow of death.* I would prefer reading this as connected with the previous word—"the deep darkness of the shadow of death." The Hebrew will bear this, and indeed it is the ob-

vious construction. ¶ *Without any order.* The word rendered *order* (סִדְרִים) is in the plural. It is from סָדַר, obsolete, to place in a row or order, to arrange. The meaning is, that everything was mingled together as in chaos, and all was confusion. Milton has used similar language:

—"A vast immeasurable abyss."

—"Dark, wasteful, wild."

Ovid uses similar language, in speaking of chaos: "Unus chaos, rudis indigestaque moles." ¶ *And where the light is as darkness.* This is a very striking and graphic expression. It means that there is no pure and clear light. Even all the light that shines there is dark, sombre, gloomy—like the little light of a total eclipse, which *seems* to be darkness itself, and which only serves to render the darkness more distressing. Compare Milton

"A dungeon horrible on all sides round,  
As one great furnace flamed, yet from those  
flames  
No light; but rather darkness visible,  
Served only to discover sights of woe."

PAB. LOST, I.

The Hebrew here literally is, "And it shines forth (הִתְקַדֵּשׁ) as darkness;" i. e., the very shining of the light there, if there is any, is like darkness! Such was the view of Job of the abodes of the dead—even of the pious dead. I wonder he shrank back from it, and wished to live. Such is the prospect of the grave to man, till Christianity comes and reveals a brighter world beyond the grave—a world that *is all light*. That darkness is now scattered. A clear light shines even around the grave, and beyond there is a world where *all is light*, and where "there is no night," and where all is one bright eternal day. Rev. xxi. 23; xxii. 5. O, had Job been favored with these views of heaven, he would not have thus feared to die!

## CHAPTER XI.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

THIS chapter contains the first speech of Zophar. In regard to this person, see Note on ch. II. 11. It is generally agreed that he has less ability, gentleness, and refinement, than either of the other speakers. The Editor of the Pictorial Bible says, "Zophar seems inferior even to Bildad in discernment, temper, and charitable consideration." Jahn says, "His first address is characterized by rusticity, his second adds but little to the first, and in the third dialogue he has no reply to make." Hales says, "He, without any reserve, taxes Job openly with loquacity, arrogance, and iniquity, and as justly punished for his sins; and exhorts him to repentance as the only means of recovering his prosperity." Anal. vol. ii. p. 70. Rosenmüller characterizes him as *ceteris immodestior et inhumanius*. I do not see the evidence, however, unless it be in the commencement of his discourse, that he is more rude and severe than Eliphaz or Bildad. Like them, he takes it for granted that Job had sinned, and assures him, that if he would return to God he should have prosperity and happiness again. This is the current strain of all their speeches; and in this they all agree. All are severe in their remarks, and it may be admitted that Zophar is much less argumentative than Eliphaz, and that his speeches are in fact little more than a repetition of what his friends had before said.

The speech in this chapter properly comprises three parts.

I. He accuses Job of garrulity, of arrogance, and of impiety, in maintaining his own innocence in the circumstances in which he then was. The ground of this was, that Job maintained his innocence, and held that he was pure in the sight of God, vs. 1—4.

II. He says that he wishes that God would speak to Job and acquaint him with *his* estimate of what he was. He affirms that God exacted of him less than his iniquity deserved; and then goes into a sublime description of God, as vast, and as unfathomable in his counsels and plans. He declares not only that God is *great*, but that he knows the heart of man, and knows exactly what he deserves. Man, he says, however, would arraign the divine counsels and plans, though he was born like a wild ass's colt. Zophar does not attempt to explain the equity of the divine dealings, but he dwells on the greatness and the sovereignty of God, and on the duty of man to submit with humility, vs. 5—12.

III. He assures Job that if he would repent and turn to God, he should be prospered again. He would forget his misery; his age would be clear as noonday; he would lie down in safety,



and would again become an honoured and respected man. If he persevered in his wickedness, however, he must expect to be destroyed, for that was the lot of all the wicked, vs. 13-20.

It cannot be denied that there was much that was unkind in this speech, and much that Job would feel keenly. To *assume* that a man is wicked, that he is a hypocrite, and abandoned by God, and then to exhort him *as if* it were so, and as if it did not admit a moment's debate or excite a doubt in the mind of the speaker, is a mode of address that will find its way to the heart of any man. Job felt it; as who would not? Yet this was the error of all the friends of Job, and in a particular manner that of Zophar. To sit and hear this was one of the severe trials of that much afflicted patriarch, and if he answered occasionally with severity and sarcasm, we must remember what human nature is, and think of the severity of the provocation before we severely censure him.

**T**HEN answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,

2 Should not the multitude of words be <sup>a</sup> answered? and should a man <sup>1</sup> full of talk be justified?

a Pr. 10. 19.

<sup>1</sup> of lips.

2. *Should not the multitude of words be answered?* As if all that Job had said had been mere words; or as if he was remarkable for mere garrulity. ¶ *And should a man full of talk be justified?* Marg. as in Heb., *of lips*. The phrase is evidently a Hebraism, to denote a great talker—a man of mere lips, or empty sound. Zophar asks whether such a man could be justified or vindicated. It will be recollected that taciturnity was with the Orientals a much greater virtue than with us, and that it was regarded as one of the proofs of wisdom. The wise man with them was he who sat down at the feet of age, and desired to learn; who carefully collected the maxims of former times; who diligently observed the course of events; and who deliberated with care on what others had to say. Thus Solomon says, "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise." Prov. x. 19. So James (i. 19), "let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak." It was supposed that a man who said much would say some foolish or improper things, and hence it was regarded as a proof of prudence to be distinguished for silence. In Oriental countries, and it may be added also, in all countries that *we* regard as uncivilized, it is unusual and disrespectful to be hasty in offering counsel, to be forward to speak, or to be confident and bold in opinion. See Notes on ch. xxxii. 6, 7. It was for reasons such as

3 Should thy <sup>2</sup> lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?

<sup>2</sup> or, *devices*.

these that Zophar maintained that a man who was full of talk could not be justified in it; that there was presumptive proof that he was not a safe man, or a man who could be vindicated in all that he said.

3. *Should thy lies.* Marg. *devices*. Rosenmüller renders this "should men bear thy boastings with silence?" Dr. Good, "before thee would mankind keep silence?" Vulg., *tibi soli tacebunt homines?* "Shall men be silent before thee alone?" The LXX render the whole passage, "he who speaketh much should also hear in turn; else the fine speaker (*εὐλαλος*) thinketh himself just.—Blessed be the short-lived offspring of woman. Be not profuse of words, for there is no one that judges against thee, and do not say that I am pure in works and blameless before him." How this was made out of the Hebrew, or what is its exact sense, I am unable to say. There can be no doubt, I think, that our present translation is altogether too harsh, and that Zophar by no means designs to charge Job with uttering *lies*. The Hebrew word commonly used for *lies*, is wholly different from that which is used here. The word here (*רָגַל*) denotes properly *separation*; then a *part*; and in various combinations as a preposition, *alone*, *separate*, *besides*. Then the noun means empty talk, vain boasting; and then it may denote lies or falsehood. The leading idea is that of *separation*, or of remoteness from *anything*, as from pru-

4 For <sup>b</sup> *thou* hast said, My doctrine *is* pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.

5 But oh that God would speak, and open his lips against thee;

b c. 6. 30. 10. 7.

dence, wisdom, propriety, or truth. It is a *general* term, like our word *bad*, which I presume has been derived from this Hebrew word בָּדָה—*badh*, or from the Arabic بَدَّ, *bad*. In the plural

(בָּדִים) it is rendered *liars* in Isa. xlv. 25; Jer. l. 36; *lies* in Job xi. 3; Isa. xvi. 6; Jer. xlviii. 30; and *parts* in Job xli. 12. It is also often rendered *staves*, Ex. xxvii. 6; xxv. 14, 15. 28, *et sap. al.* That it *may* mean “lies” here I admit, but it may also mean talk that is *aside* from propriety, and may refer here to a kind of discourse that was destitute of propriety, empty, vain talk. ¶ *And when thou mockest.* That is, “shalt thou be permitted to use the language of reproach and of complaint, and no one attempt to make thee sensible of its impropriety?” The complaints and arguments of Job he represented as in fact *mocking* God. ¶ *Shall no man make thee ashamed?* Shall no one show thee the impropriety of it, and bring thy mind to a sense of shame for what it has done? This was what Zophar now proposed to do.

4. *My doctrine is pure.* The LXX, instead of the word *doctrine*, here read *deeds*, ἐργαίς; the Syriac, “thou sayest I have acted justly.” But the word here used (נִפְתָּר) means properly *fair speech*, or *taking arguments*, that by which one is *taken* or *captivated*, from נָפַת, *to take*. Then it means *doctrine*, or *instruction*, Prov. i. 5; ix. 9. Here it means the views which Job had expressed. Dr. Good supposes that it means *conduct*, a word which would suit the connexion, but the Hebrew is not used in this sense. ¶ *And I am clean in thine eyes.* In the eyes of God, or in his sight. This was a false charge. Job had never maintained that he was

6 And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that *they are* double to that which is! Know, therefore, that God exacteth of thee *less* <sup>c</sup> than thine iniquity *deserveth*.

c Ezr. 9. 13.

perfect, (comp. Notes on ch. ix. 20;) he had only maintained that he was not such a sinner as his friends maintained that he was—a hypocrite, and a man eminent for guilt. His want of absolute perfection he was ever ready to admit and mourn over.

5. *But oh that God would speak.* Heb., “and truly, who will give that God should speak.” It is the expression of an earnest wish that God would address him, and bring him to a proper sense of his ill desert. The meaning is, that if God should speak to him he would by no means find himself so holy as he now claimed to be.

6. *And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom.* The hidden things that pertain to wisdom. The reference here is to the wisdom of God himself. The sense is this: “You now think yourself pure and holy; you have confidence in your own wisdom and integrity. But this apprehension is based on a short-sighted view of God, and on ignorance of him. If he would speak and show you his wisdom; if he would express *his* sense of what purity is, you would at once see how far you have come from perfection, and would be overwhelmed with a sense of your comparative vileness and sin.” ¶ *That they are double to that which is!* Noyes renders this, “his wisdom, which is unsearchable.” Dr. Good, strangely enough, “for they are intricacies to iniquity.” The expression, as it stands in our common version, is not very intelligible; and indeed it is difficult to attach any idea to it. Of the *words* used in the Hebrew, the sense is not difficult. The word כָּפַל, *double*, is from כָּפַל *to fold, to double*; and means a doubling (Job xli. 5); and then two folds, or double folds, and the sense here is, that the wisdom of God is

7 Canst thou by searching <sup>d</sup>

d Isa. 40. 28. Ro. 11. 33.

*double-fold*; that is, complicated, inexplicable, or manifold. It is not spread out and plain, but is infolded, so that it requires to be unrolled to be understood. The word rendered "that which is"

(הַמִּשְׁתַּדֵּר), means properly a setting upright, uprightness—from שָׁדַר. Hence it means help, deliverance, Job vi. 13; purpose, undertaking, Notes on Job v. 12; and then counsel, wisdom, understanding, Job xii. 16; Isa. xxviii. 29. It means here, I suppose, *understanding*; and the idea is, that the wisdom of God is "double of understanding;" that is, it is so unfolded, so complex, that it greatly surpasses our comprehension.

What we see is a small part of it; and the "secrets" of his wisdom—the parts of his wisdom which are not unfolded, are far above our grasp. His wisdom is like a vast *roll* or volume, only the first and a very small part of which is unrolled so that we can read it. But who can look into that which remains unopened, and penetrate between the involutions, so as to perceive and read it all? It is but little that is now unrolled of the mighty volume—the remainder will be unfolded as years and ages shall pass on, and the entire unfolding of the book will be reserved for eternity. ¶ *Know, therefore, that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth.* The word here rendered

"exacteth" (שָׁחַק) more properly means *to forget*—from שָׁחַק. It also means to loan on usury, or to borrow; but the sense here is rather that of forgetting. It is not used in the sense of *exacting*. The true meaning is, "know, therefore, that for thee God hath caused to be forgotten a part of thy iniquity." That is, he has treated you as if he had caused a part of your sins to be out of mind, or as if they were not remembered. Instead of treating you, as you complain, with severity, he has by no means inflicted on you the calamities which you deserve. The ground of this unfeeling assertion is the abstract proposition that God is infinitely wiser

than men; that he has a deeper insight into human guilt than men can have; and that if he should disclose to us all that he sees of the heart, we should be amazed at the revelations of our own sins. This sentiment is undoubtedly true, and accords almost exactly with what Job had himself said (ch. x. 19—22), but there is something very harsh and severe in the manner in which Zophar applies it.

7. *Canst thou by searching find out God?* In order to illustrate the sentiment which he had just expressed, that the secrets of divine wisdom must be far above our comprehension, Zophar introduces here this sublime description of God—a description which seems to have the form and force of a proverb. It seems to have been a settled opinion, that man could not find out the Almighty to perfection by his own powers—a sentiment which is as true now as it was then, and which is of the utmost importance in all our inquiries about the Creator. The sentiment is expressed in a most beautiful manner; and the language itself is not unworthy of the theme. The word "searching," שָׁחַק, is from שָׁחַק, to search, to search out, to examine; and the primary sense, according to Gesenius, lies in searching in the earth by boring or digging—as for

diligence and care. Here it means, that by the utmost attention in examining the works of God, it would be impossible for man to find out the Almighty to perfection. All the investigations which have been made of God have fallen short of the object; and at the present time it is as true as it was in the days of Job, that we cannot, by searching, find him out. Of much that pertains to him and his plans we must be content to remain in ignorance, until we are admitted to the revelations of a higher world—happy and thankful now that we are permitted to know so much of him as we do, and that we are apprised of the existence of ONE INFINITE

8 *It is* <sup>1</sup> *as high as heaven;* what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?

<sup>1</sup> *the heights of heaven.*

AND PERFECT MIND. It is an inexpressible privilege to know *anything* of God; and it is proof of the exalted nature of man, that he is now capable of becoming in any degree acquainted with the divine nature.

8. It is *as high as heaven*. That is, the knowledge of God; or the subject is as high as heaven. The idea is, that man is incompetent to examine, with accuracy, an object that is as far off as the heavens; and that as the knowledge of God *must* be of that character, it is vain for him to attempt to investigate it fully. There is an energy in the Hebrew which is lost in our common translation. The Hebrew is abrupt and very emphatic: "The heights of the heavens!" It is the language of one looking up with astonishment at the high heavens, and overpowered with the thought that the knowledge of God must be higher even than those distant skies. Who can hope to understand it? Who can be qualified to make the investigation? It is a matter of simple but sublime truth, that God *must* be higher than these heavens; and when we take into view the amazing distances of many of the heavenly bodies, as now known by the aid of modern astronomy, we may ask, with deeper emphasis by far than Zophar did, "Can we by searching find out God?" ¶ *Deeper than hell*. Heb. "Than Sheol"—חֵשֶׁךְ. The LXX render this, "the heaven is high, what canst thou do? And there are things deeper than in Hades—βαθύτερα τῶν ἐν ᾗδου—what dost thou know?" On the meaning of the word *Sheol*, see Notes on Isa. chs. v. 14, xiv. 9. It seems to have been supposed to be as deep as the heavens are high; and the idea here is, that it would be impossible for man to investigate a subject that was as profound as Sheol was deep. The idea is not that God was in Sheol, but that the subject was as profound as the abode of departed spirits was deep and remote. It is possible

9 The measure thereof *is longer* than the earth, and broader than the sea.

that the Psalmist may have had this passage in his eye in the similar expression, occurring in the cxxxixth Psalm:

If I ascend into heaven, thou art there;  
If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

9. *The measure thereof is longer than the earth*. The measure of the knowledge of God. The extent of the earth would be one of the longest measures known to the ancients. Yet it is now impossible to ascertain what ideas were attached, in the time of Job, to the extent of the earth—and it is not necessary to know this in order to understand this expression. It is morally certain that the prevailing ideas were very limited, and that a small part of the earth was then known. The general belief seems to have been, that it was a vast plain, surrounded by water, but how supported, and what were its limits, were evidently matters to them unknown. The earliest knowledge which we have of geography, as understood by the Arabs, represents the earth as wholly encompassed by an ocean, like a zone. This was usually characterized as a "Sea of Darkness," an appellation usually given to the Atlantic; while to the Northern Sea was given the name of "The Sea of Pitchy Darkness." Edrisi imagined the land to be floating in the sea, and only part appearing above, like an egg in a basin of water. If these views prevailed so late as the tenth and eleventh centuries of the Christian era, it is reasonable to conclude that the views of the figure and size of the earth must have been extremely limited in the time of Job. On the ancient views of geography, see Notes on ch. xxvi. 7—10, and the maps there, also Murray's *Encyclopædia of Geography*, Book I., and Eschenberg's *Manual of Classical Literature*, by Prof. Fiske, Part I. ¶ *And broader than the sea*. What was the idea of the breadth of the sea, which was supposed to surround the earth, it is now wholly im-

10 If <sup>e</sup> he <sup>1</sup> cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can <sup>2</sup> hinder him?

<sup>e</sup> Re. 3. 7. <sup>1</sup> or, make a change.  
<sup>2</sup> turn him away.

possible to determine. Probably there were no ideas on the subject that could be regarded as settled and definite. The ancients had no means of ascertaining this, and they perhaps supposed that the ocean extended to an unlimited extent—or, perhaps, to the far-distant place where the sky and the water appeared to meet. At all events it was an illustration then, as it is now, of a vast distance, and is not inappropriately used here to denote the impossibility of fully understanding God. This illustration would be far more striking than now. We have crossed the ocean; and we do not deem it an impracticable thing to explore the remotest seas. But not so the ancients. They kept close to the shore. They seldom ventured out of sight of land. The enterprise of exploring and crossing the vast ocean, which they supposed encompassed the globe, was regarded by them as *wholly impracticable*—and equally so they correctly supposed it was to find out God.

10. *If he cut off.* Marg. *Make a change.* But neither of these phrases properly expresses the sense of the original. The whole image here is probably that of arresting a criminal and bringing him to trial, and the language is taken from the mode of conducting a prosecution. The word rendered “cut off”—חָתַךְ, from חָתַךְ—means, properly, to pass along; to pass on; then to pass against any one, to rush on, to assail; and in a remote sense in Piel and Hiphil, to cause to pass on or away, that is, to change. This is the sense expressed in the margin. The idea is not that of cutting off, but is that of making a *rush* upon a man, for the purpose of arresting him and bringing him to trial. There are frequent references to such trials in the book of Job. The Chaldee renders this, “if he pass on and shut up the heavens with clouds”—but the paraphrast evidently did not understand the passage. ¶ *And shut up.* That is, im-

11 For <sup>f</sup> he knoweth vain men: he seeth wickedness also; will he not then consider it?

<sup>f</sup> Ps. 10. 14.

prison or detain with a view to trial. Some such detention is always practised of necessity before trial. ¶ *Or gather together.* Gather together the parties for trial; or rather, call the individual into court for trial. The word קָרָא means, properly, to call together, to convoke, as a people; and is used to denote the custom of assembling the people for a trial, or, as we would say, to “call the court,” which is now the office of a crier. ¶ *Then who can hinder him?* Marg. *Who can turn him away?* He has all power, and no one can resist him. No one can deliver the criminal from his hands. Zophar here is, in fact, repeating in another form what Job had himself said (ch. ix. 3, seq.), and the sentiment seems to be proverbial. The idea here is, that if God should call a man into judgment, and hold him guilty, he could neither answer nor resist him. God is so great; he so intimately knows the human heart; he has so thorough an acquaintance with all our past sins, that we cannot hope to answer him or escape. Zophar argues on this principle: “God holds you to be guilty. He is punishing you accordingly. You do not feel it so, or suppose that you deserve all this. But he sees your heart, and knows all your life. If he holds you to be guilty, it is so. You cannot answer him, and you should so regard it, and submit.”

11. *For he knoweth vain men.* He is intimately acquainted with the heart; he knows men altogether. The word *vain* here (רִיק), means, properly, vanity, emptiness, falsehood, a lie, iniquity. “Men of vanity” here may mean men whose opinions are valueless, or it may mean men of deceit, falsehood, hypocrisy. Most probably it means the latter, and the indirect reference may be to such men as Job. The sense is, that God is intimately acquainted with such men. They cannot deceive him, and their wickedness will be found out.

12 For <sup>1</sup> vain man would be  
<sup>1</sup> empty.

¶ *Will he not then consider it?* Various ways have been proposed of explaining this. By some it is supposed to mean, "He seeth iniquity where they do not observe it;" that is, he perceives it where men do not themselves. This would express a thought which would accord well with the connexion, but it is doubtful whether the Hebrew will bear this construction. By another explanation it is supposed to mean, as in our common version, "Will not God observe it, and bring it to trial? Will he suffer it to pass unnoticed?" This makes good sense, and the Hebrew will admit of this interpretation. But there is another view still, which is preferable to either. According to this it means, that God perceives the iniquity in man, though he does not *seem* to notice it. See Notes on ver. 6. He appears to pass over a part of it, but he sees it, notwithstanding, and is intimately acquainted with all the depravity of the heart. The main reference here is to Job, and the object is, to show him that he was guilty, though he had asserted his innocence in so decided a manner. Though he seemed to himself to be innocent, yet Zophar labours to show him that he must be guilty, and that he had seen but a small part of his sins.

12. For vain man. Marg. *empty*. רֵקֵם, according to Gesenius, from the root רָקַם, to bore through, and then to be hollow, metaphorical, *empty, foolish*. The LXX, strangely enough, render this, "but man floats about with words." The Hebrew here means, manifestly, hollow, empty; then insincere and hypocritical. Zophar refers to a hollow-hearted man, who, though he was, in fact, like a wild ass's colt, attempted to appear mild and gentle, and to have a heart. The meaning is, that man by nature has a spirit untamed and unsubdued, and that *with* this, he assumes the appearance of gentleness and tenderness, and attempts to appear as if he was worthy of love and affection. God, seeing this hollow-heartedness, treats him accordingly. The reference here is to men like Job,

wise, though man be born *like* a wild ass's colt.

and Zophar undoubtedly meant to say, that he was hollow-hearted and insincere, and yet that he wished to appear to be a man having a heart, or, having true piety. ¶ *Would be wise*. Various interpretations have been given to this expression. The most simple and obvious seems to be the true one, though I have not seen it noticed by any of the commentators. The word rendered "would be wise" (יִבְיָהוּ) is from בָּיָהוּ, or בָּיָה, meaning heart, and the sense here, as it seems to me, is, "vain, hollow, and insincere, man would wish to seem to have a heart;" that is, would desire to appear sincere, or pious. Destitute of that truly, and false and hollow, he would nevertheless wish to appear different, and would put on the aspect of sincerity and religion. This is the most simple exposition, and this accords with the drift of the passage exactly, and expresses a sentiment which is unquestionably true. Gesenius, however, and some others, render it, "but man is hollow, and wanteth understanding; yea, man is born like a wild ass's colt, signifying the weakness and dulness of the human understanding in comparison with the Divine wisdom." Others render it, "but the foolish man becometh wise when the wild ass's colt shall become a man," i. e., never—a most forced and unnatural construction. Dr. Good renders it:

Will he then accept the hollow-hearted person?  
Or shall the wild ass-colt assume the man?

Schultens and Dathe translate it:

Let then vain man be wise,  
And the wild ass's colt become a man.

¶ *Though man be born*. Though man by nature, or in connexion with his birth, is untamed, lawless, rebellious. The wild ass is a striking image of that which is untamed and unsubdued. Comp. Notes on ch. xxxix. 5. Thus Jeremiah describes it, "a wild ass used to the wilderness, that snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure," Jer. ii. 24. Thus it is said of Ishmael (Gen. xvi. 12), "and he will be a wild man," וְיִשְׁמָאֵל יִהְיֶה אִשְׁמָלִי.

13 If thou prepare <sup>s</sup> thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him;

g 1 Sa. 7. 3.

— *a wild ass of a man.* So Job xxxix. 5:

Who hath sent out the wild ass free;  
Or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?

It is not quite easy for us to understand these allusions, for with us the *ass* is the proverbial image of stupidity, dullness, obstinacy, and immobility. But it was not so with the ancients. It is mentioned as distinguished for velocity, for wildness, and for an unsubdued spirit. Thus Oppian, as quoted by Bochart, Hieroz. Lib. i. c. ix. p. 63, says:

Κραιπνόν, ἀελλοπόδην, κρατερωνυχον, δξύτατον  
θεῖον.

*Swift, rapid, with strong hoofs, and most fleet in his course.* And Aristotle mentions wild asses as τὴν ταχυτῆτα διαφέροντες, *Hist. Lib. vi. 6, c. 36.* So Ælian says of them, ὥκιστοι δραμεῖν, *fleet in their course.* And Xenophon says of them, πολὺ τοῦ ἵππου θάττον ἔτρεχον, they run much swifter than a horse. In describing the march of the younger Cyrus through Syria, he says, "The wild ass, being swifter of foot than our horses, would, in gaining ground upon them, stand still and look around; and when their pursuers got nearly up to them, they would start off, and repeat the same trick; so that there remained to the hunters no other method of taking them but by dividing themselves into dispersed parties which succeeded each other in the chase." Comp. Bochart, Hieroz. P. I. Lib. iii. c. xvi. p. 867—879. A similar statement is made by Ælian (Lib. xiv. c. 10, as quoted by Bochart), "The wild asses of Maurusius (ὄνοι Μαυρούσιοι) are most fleet in their course, and at the commencement of their course they seem to be borne along by the winds, or as on the wings of a bird." "In Persia," says the Editor of the Pictorial Bible, "the wild ass is prized above all other animals as an object of chase, not only from its fleetness, but the delicacy of its flesh, which made it an article of

14 If iniquity *be* in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in <sup>h</sup> thy tabernacles.

h Ps. 101. 3.

luxury even at the royal tables."

"They are now most abundantly found in the deserts of Tartary, and of the countries between the Tigris and the Indus, more particularly in the central parts of the regions thus defined. We know that they were also anciently found in the regions of Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Syria, and Arabia Deserta; but from these regions they seem to have been, in the course of ages, almost entirely expelled or extirpated." *Pict. Bib.* on Job xxxix. 5. The idea in the passage before us is, that man at his birth has a strong resemblance to a wild and untamed animal; and the passage undoubtedly indicates the early belief of the native proneness of man to wander away from God, and of his possessing by nature an insubmissive spirit.

13. *If thou prepare thine heart.* Zophar now proceeds to state that if Job even yet would return to God, he might hope for acceptance. Though he had sinned, and though he was now, as he supposed, a hollow-hearted and an insincere man, yet, if he would repent, he might expect the Divine favor. In this he accords with the sentiment of Eli-phaz, and he concludes his speech in a manner not a little resembling his. See ch. v. 17—27. ¶ *And stretch out thine hands toward him.* In the attitude of supplication. To stretch out, or spread forth the hands, is a phrase often used to denote the act of supplication. See 1 Tim. ii. 9, and the Notes of Wetstein on that place. Horace, 3 Carm. xxiii. 1, Cælo supinas si tuleris manus. Ovid, M. ix. 701, Ad sidera supplex Cressa manus tollens. Trist. i. 10, 21, Ipse gubernator, tollens ad sidera palmas. Comp. Livy v. 21; Seneca, Ep. 41; Ps. ciii. 22; cxxxiv. 2; cxli. 2; Ezra ix. 47.

14. *If iniquity be in thine hand.* If you have in your possession anything that has been unjustly obtained. If you have oppressed the poor and the fatherless, and have what properly belongs to them, let it be restored. *This*

15 For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear:

16 Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as

is the obvious duty of one who comes to God to implore his favor. Comp. Luke xix. 8.

15. *For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot.* That is, thy face shall be bright, clear, and cheerful. Thus we speak of a bright and happy countenance. Zophar undoubtedly designs to show what his appearance would be, contrasted with what it then was. Now his countenance was dejected and sad. It was disfigured by tears, and terror, and long continued anguish. But if he would put away iniquity, and return to God, his face would be cheerful again, and he would be a happy man. ¶ *Yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear.* The word rendered "stedfast" (צָרָה) is from צָרַח, to pour, to pour out, and is applied to liquids, or to metals which are fused and poured into a mould, and which then become hard. Hence it is used in the sense of firm, solid, intrepid. Gesenius. Schultens supposes that the reference here is to metallic mirrors, made by casting, and then polished, and that the idea is, that his face would shine like such a mirror. But it may be doubted whether this interpretation is not too refined. The other and more common explanation well suits the sense, and should probably be retained.

16. *And remember it as waters that pass away.* As calamity that has completely gone by, or that has rolled on and will return no more. The comparison is beautiful. The water of the river is borne by us, and returns no more. The rough, the swollen, the turbid stream, we remember as it foamed and dashed along, threatening to sweep everything away; but it went swiftly by, and will never come back. So with afflictions. They are soon gone. The most intense pain soon subsides. The days of sorrow pass quickly away.

waters *that* pass away:

17 And *thine* age shall <sup>1</sup> be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine <sup>1</sup> forth, thou shalt be as the morning.

<sup>1</sup> *arise above the noon-day.* i Pr. 4. 18. Is. 58. 8. 10.

There is an outer limit of suffering, and even ingenuity cannot prolong it far. The man disgraced, and whose life is a burden, will soon die. On the cheeks of the solitary prisoner doomed to the dungeon for life, a "mortal paleness" will soon settle down, and the comforts of approaching death will soothe the anguish of his sad heart. The rack of torture cheats itself of its own purpose, and the exhausted sufferer is released. "The excess [of grief] makes it soon mortal." "No sorrow but killed itself much sooner." *Shakspeare*. When we look back upon our sorrows, it is like thinking of the stream that was so much swollen, and was so impetuous. Its waters rolled on, and they come not back again; and there is a kind of pleasure in thinking of that time of danger, of that flood that was then so fearful, and that has now swept on to come back no more. So there is a kind of peaceful joy in thinking of the days of sorrow that are now fled for ever; in the assurance that those sad times will never, never recur again.

17. *And thine age.* Thy life. This does not mean old age, but the idea is, that his *life* would be cheerful and happy. ¶ *Clearer than the noonday.* Marg., *Arise above the noon-day.* The margin is a literal rendering; but the sense is clear in the text. The idea is, that the remainder of his life would be bright as the sun if he would return to God. ¶ *Thou shalt shine forth.* Or rather, "thou art now in darkness, but thou shalt be as the morning." The word here used—נִרְאָה, is from נָרָא, to cover—as with wings, to fly, to cover with darkness. In no instance does it mean to shine, or to be clear and bright; and why our translators attach that idea to it, it is now difficult to conjecture.



18 And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig *about thee*, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety.

19 Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make *thee* afraid; yea, many <sup>1</sup> shall make suit unto  
<sup>1</sup> *intreat thy face.*

The Chaldee and Syriac read the word as a noun, and render the passage, "and thy *darkness* shall be as the aurora." The Vulgate renders it, "and meridian splendor, as it were, shall arise upon thee at the evening." The LXX, "and thy prayer shall be like the morning star, and life shall rise upon thee from noon-day." The sense in the Hebrew is plain. He was then in darkness. Clouds and calamities were round about him, but if he would return to God, he would be permitted to enjoy a bright day of prosperity. Such a day would return to him like the morning after a long and gloomy night.

18. *And thou shalt be secure.* You will feel confident that your prosperity will be permanent, and you will be free from the distressing anxieties and fears which you now have. ¶ *Thou shalt dig about thee.* The Chaldee renders this, "thou shalt prepare for thyself a sepulchre, and shalt lie down in safety." The word here used (חָפַד) has two significations. It means, (1) *to dig*—as, e. g., a well, and under this signification, to search out, to explore; and, (2) to be ashamed, to blush, Isa. i. 29. According to Gesenius, the latter here is the signification. "Now thou art ashamed, then thou shalt dwell in quiet." *Lex.* So Noyes renders it. Dr. Good translates it, "yea, thou shalt look around;" Rosenmüller, "thou art suffused with shame." This is, probably, the true sense; and the idea is, that though he was now covered with shame, yet he would lie down in peace and safety if he would return to the Lord.

19. *Many shall make suit unto thee.* Many shall come in a suppliant manner to ask counsel and advice. The meaning is, that he would be a man of distinction, to whom many would look for

thee.

20 But the eyes <sup>k</sup> of the wicked shall fail, and <sup>2</sup> they shall not escape, and their <sup>1</sup> hope *shall be as* <sup>3</sup> the giving up of the ghost.

<sup>k</sup> De. 28. 65.

<sup>2</sup> *Flight shall perish from them.* <sup>1</sup> Pr. 11. 7.  
<sup>3</sup> or, a puff of breath.

counsel. This was evidently an honor highly valued in the East, and one on which Job had formerly prided himself. See ch. xxix. 7—13.

20. *But the eyes of the wicked shall fail.* That is, they shall be wearied out by anxiously looking for relief from their miseries. *Noyes.* Their expectation shall be vain, and they shall find no relief. *Perhaps* Zophar here means to apply this to Job, and to say to him, that with his present views and character his hope of relief would fail. His only hope of relief was in a change—in turning to God—since it was a settled maxim that the wicked would look for relief in vain. This *assumption* that he was a wicked man, must have been among the most trying things that Job had to endure. Indeed, nothing could be more provoking than to have others *take it for granted* as a matter that did not admit of argument, that he was a hypocrite, and that God was dealing with him as an incorrigible sinner. ¶ *And they shall not escape.* *Marg.* *Flight shall perish from them.* The margin is a literal translation of the Hebrew. The sense is, escape for the wicked is out of the question. They must be arrested and punished. ¶ *And their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.* Literally, "the breathing out of the life or soul." Their hope shall leave them as the breath or life does the body. It is like death. The expression does not mean that their hope would always expire *at* death, but that it would certainly expire *as* life leaves the body. The meaning is, that whatever hope a wicked man has of future happiness and salvation, must fail. The time must come when it will cease to comfort and support him. The hope of the pious man lives until it is lost in fruition in heaven.

It attends him in health; supports him in sickness; is with him at home; accompanies him abroad; cheers him in solitude; is his companion in society; is with him as he goes down into the shades of adversity, and it brightens as he travels along the valley of the shadow of death. It stands as a bright star over his grave—and is lost only in the glories of heaven, as the morning star is lost in the superior brightness of the rising sun. Not so the hypocrite and the sinner. His hope dies—and he leaves the world in despair. Sooner or

later, the last ray of his delusive hopes shall take its departure from the soul, and leave it to darkness. No matter how bright it may have been; no matter how long he has cherished it; no matter on what it is founded—whether on his morals, his prayers, his accomplishments, his learning; if it be not based on true conversion, and the promised mercy of God through a Redeemer, it must soon cease to shine, and will leave the soul to the gloom of black despair.

## CHAPTER XII.

## ANALYSIS OF CHAPTERS XII. XIII. AND XIV.

THESE three chapters, which comprise the reply of Job to the speech of Zophar, and in general to what had been advanced by his friends, embrace the following points:—

I. He commences the reply with a severe sarcasm—the first in which he had indulged—on the superiority which they assumed. They were “*the people*,” he said, and wisdom would die with them, ch. xii. 2.

II. He affirms that he understood the points on which they had insisted as well as they; that they had advanced nothing that was new to him, or which he had not often reflected on; that by urging these plain maxims and common-place topics, they had done him an unkindness by undervaluing his understanding, and complains that they had added to his sorrows by inflicting on him these truisms, and compelling him to hear sentiments with which he was so familiar, but which they supposed were profound and novel discoveries, ch. xii. 3—5.

III. He then re-affirms his main position (ver. 6), maintaining that the worst of men, so far from receiving the punishment which was their due, were in fact prospered; and then proceeds to show them what *he* knew of God. They had spoken of his wisdom and power, as if he were ignorant on the subject. He proceeds, therefore, to discourse of the Most High in a manner calculated to make them ashamed of their comparatively obscure and narrow views, and to show that he had reflected on that point much more than they had, ch. xii. 7—25; xiii. 1, 2. This part of the discourse may be regarded somewhat as a trial of skill; or an attempt to show that he could speak of God in strains as sublime as they could, and that the maxims which he had treasured up were quite as well calculated to exalt God as theirs were. He speaks of the universal sovereignty of God; says that the knowledge of him is to be learned from the beasts, the earth, and the whole course of events; admits that his agency is seen everywhere, but maintains that his dispensations are not in exact accordance with the character of man, and that men are not treated according to their deserts in this life.

IV. He expresses his earnest desire to transfer his cause to the tribunal of the Almighty. This he wishes, because he believes that God would be just, and because his friends were manifestly so severe in their judgments, ch. xiii. 3—13. In the course of this part of the argument, he accuses them of injustice and unkindness, and concludes it by desiring that they would hold their peace. Their arguments, he said, were such as to dishonor God, and to expose them to the Divine displeasure, and he counsels them, if they would be wise, to be silent.

V. In ch. xiii. 14—28, he makes his appeal, in the most solemn manner, to God. He urges the most earnest protestations of his innocence, and affirms that it is his intention to trust in God, though he should slay him; but in connexion with this, he remonstrates in the most pathetic manner with God for afflicting him as he was doing.

VI. The argument of Job is closed in chapter xiv. by a description of the shortness of human life, of exquisite beauty. This is a part of his address to God, and is the expression of the deep feelings of his soul. It is full of mingled emotions of fear, and hope, and despondency, exhibiting doubts respecting the future state, with occasionally a slight hope of it, until his mind sinks into utter despondency, and he wishes that he were in the grave. This beautiful chapter contains the following parts, viz:—

(1.) An affirmation that man is born to trouble, and must soon be cut down, vs. 1, 2.

(2.) Since such must be the lot of man, Job asks why God should afflict him? Why not suffer

him to enjoy his few days here in peace, and let him pass through his brief existence without annoyance? vs. 3—6.

(3.) He then adverts with the deepest feeling to the fact that a man when he is dead will not be suffered to live again on the earth, vs. 7—12. A tree when it is cut down will spring up again; and if it were so with man, he might well bear to be afflicted. But he was cut down, and never again, while the heavens endured, would he be allowed to revisit the earth.

(4.) He then expresses the earnest wish that God would hide him in the grave until his wrath should be overpast; and that then, if He would call him forth, he would answer him, and would vindicate himself. Now, while thus suffering under the expressions of the Divine displeasure, he was unequal to it. God watched him, and as waters wash away stones, and even the mountain is wasted away, so man *must* waste away under long-continued trials. With this language of mingled complaint, remonstrance, despondency, and doubt, Job closes the first series of the controversy. He is evidently in deep perplexity. He knows not what to do, or what to think; but on the whole his language is that of one who felt that God and man were alike against him, and that he had no comforter.

**A**ND Job answered and said,  
2 No doubt but ye *are* the  
people, and wisdom shall die with  
you.

3 But I have <sup>1</sup> understanding  
<sup>1</sup> *an heart.*

2. *No doubt but ye are the people.* That is, the only wise people. You have engrossed all the wisdom of the world, and all else are to be regarded as fools. This is evidently the language of severe sarcasm; and it shows a spirit fretted and chafed by their reproaches. Job felt contempt for their reasoning, and meant to intimate that their maxims, on which they placed so much reliance, were common-place, and such as every one was familiar with. ¶ *And wisdom shall die with you.* This is ironical, but it is language such as is common perhaps everywhere. "The people of the East," says Roberts, "take great pleasure in irony, and some of their satirical sayings are very cutting. When a sage intimates that he has superior wisdom, or when he is disposed to rally another for his meagre attainments, he says 'Yes, yes, you are the man!' 'Your wisdom is like the sea.' 'When you die, whither will wisdom go?'" In a serious sense, language like this is used by the classic writers to describe the death of eminently great or good men. They speak of wisdom, bravery, piety, or music, as dying with them. Thus Moschus, *Idyll.* iii. 12.

"Ὅττι βίων τέθνακεν ὁ βῶκος, ὅττι σὺν αὐτῷ  
καὶ τὸ μέλος τεθνακε, καὶ ὤλετο Δωρίς αἰοῖδά.

"Bion the swain is dead, and with him song  
has died, and the Doric muse has perished."

Expressions like these are common.

as well as you; I <sup>2</sup> *am* not infe-  
rior to you: yea, <sup>3</sup> who knoweth  
not such things as these?

<sup>2</sup> *fall not lower than you.*  
<sup>3</sup> *with whom are not such as these?*

Thus, in the "Pleasures of Hope" it is said:

"And freedom shrieked when Kosciusko fell."

3. *But I have understanding as well as you.* Marg. as in the Heb., *an heart.* The word *heart* in the Scriptures is often used to denote the understanding, or mind. It seems to have been regarded as the source of that which was called life, or soul. Indeed, I do not recollect a single instance in the Scriptures in which the word "*head*" is used, as with us, as the seat of the intellect, or where the distinction is adverted to that is so common with us, between the head and the heart. With us, the heart is the seat of the affections and emotions; with the Hebrews it was the seat of understanding; and the *σπλάγχνα*—the viscera, the bowels, were the seat of the emotions. See Notes on Isa. xvi. 11. A more correct physiology has taught us that the brain is the organ of the intellect, and we now speak of the *heart* as the seat of the affections. The Romans regarded the *breast* as the seat of the soul. Thus Virgil, speaking of the death of Lucagus by the hand of Æneas, says:

"*Tum latebras animæ pectus mucrone reclu-  
dit.*" ÆN. x. 601.

¶ *I am not inferior to you.* Marg., *fall not lower than.* This is the literal translation: "I do not fall beneath you." Job claims to be equal to them in the

4 I am *as* one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he answereth him: the just upright *man* is laughed to scorn.

power of quoting the sayings of the ancients; and in order to show this, he proceeds to adduce a number of proverbial sayings, occupying the remainder of this chapter, to show that he was familiar with that mode of reasoning, and that in this respect he was fully their equal. This may be regarded as a trial of skill, and was quite common in the East. Wisdom consisted in storing up a large amount of proverbs and maxims, and in applying them readily and pertinently on all public occasions; and in this controversy Job was by no means disposed to yield to them. ¶ *Yea, who knoweth not such things as these?* Marg., *With whom are not such as these?* The meaning is, that instead of being original, the sentiments which they advanced were the most common-place imaginable. Job not only said that *he* knew them, but that it would be strange if everybody did not know them.

4. *I am as one mocked of his neighbour.* There has been considerable variety in the interpretation of this verse. The general sense is, that Job felt himself to be a mere laughing-stock to his neighbors. They treated him as if he were not worth regarding. They had no sympathy for him in his sorrows, and they showed no respect for his opinions. Dr. Good understands this and the following verses as a part of the controversy in which Job proposes to show his skill in debate, and to adduce proverbs after the manner of his friends. But it is more probably an allusion to himself, and is designed to state that he felt that he was not treated with the respect which was due to him. Much difficulty has been felt in understanding the connexion. Reiske contends that ver. 2 has no connexion with ver. 3, and that vs. 11, 12 should be interposed between them. The connexion seems to me to be this: Job complains that he was not treated with due deference. They had showed no respect for his understanding

5 He that is ready to slip with *his* feet is *as* a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease.

and rank; they had urged the most common-place topics; advanced stale and trite apothegms, as if he had never heard them; dwelt on maxims familiar even to the meanest persons; and had treated him in this manner as if he were a mere child in knowledge. Thus to be approached with vague common-places, and with remarks such as would be used in addressing children, he regarded as insult and mockery. ¶ *Who calleth upon God, and he answereth him.* This phrase has given occasion to great variety in the interpretation. Umbreit renders it, "I, who once called upon God, and he answered me;" that is, I, who once was a happy man, and blessed of God. Schultens renders it, "I, who call upon God" *i. e.*, for trial, "and am ready to answer him." Rosenmüller supposes that Job has reference to the assurances of his friends, that if he would call upon God he would answer him, and that in view of that suggestion he exclaims, "Shall a man who is a laughing-stock to his neighbor call upon God, and will he answer him?" The probable meaning is, that he had been a man who had had constant communion with God. He had been a favorite of the Almighty, for he had lent a listening ear to his supplications. It was now a thing of which he might reasonably complain, that a man who had enjoyed such manifest tokens of the Divine favor, was treated with reproach and scorn.

5. *He that is ready to slip with his feet.* The man whose feet waver or totter; that is, the man in adversity. See Prov. xxv. 19. A man in prosperity is represented as standing firm; one in adversity, as wavering, or falling. See Ps. lxxiii. 2:

But as for me, my feet were almost gone;  
My steps had well nigh slipped.

There is much difficulty in this passage and it has by no means been removed by the labour of critics. The reader may consult Rosenmüller, Good, and Schultens, on the verse, for a more full

6 The tabernacles of robbers  
 a prosper, and they that provoke

a Ps. 73. 12, &c. Je. 12. 1, &c.

attempt to illustrate its meaning. Dr. Good, after Reiske and Parkhurst, has offered an explanation by rendering the whole passage thus:

The just, the perfect man is a laughing-stock  
 to the proud,

A derision amidst the sunshine of the prosperous,

While ready to slip with his foot.

It does not appear to me, however, that this translation can be fairly educed from the Hebrew text, and I am disposed to acquiesce in the more common and obvious interpretation. According to that, the idea is, that a man in adversity, when falling from a high condition of honor, is regarded as an almost extinguished lamp, that is now held in contempt, and is cast away. When the torch was blazing, it was regarded as of value; when nearly extinguished, it would be regarded as worthless, and would be cast away. So when a man was in prosperity, he would be looked up to as a guide and an example; in adversity his counsels would be rejected, and he would be looked upon with contempt. Nothing can be more certain or more common than the *fact* here adverted to. The rich and the great are looked up to with respect and veneration. Their words and actions have an influence which those of no other men have. When they begin to fall, others are willing to hasten their fall. Long cherished but secret envy begins to show itself; those who wish to rise rejoice in their ruin, and they are looked upon with contempt in proportion to their former honor, rank, and power. They are regarded as an extinguished torch—of no value, and are cast away. ¶ *In the thought.* In the mind, or the view. ¶ *Of him that is at ease.* In a state of comfort and prosperity. He finds no sympathy from them. Job doubtless meant to apply this to his friends. They were then at ease, and were prosperous. Not suffering pain, and not overwhelmed with poverty, they now looked with the utmost composure on him—as they would

God are secure; into whose hand  
 God bringeth abundantly.

on a torch which was burnt out, and which there would be no hope of rekindling.

6. *The tabernacles of robbers prosper.* The tents or dwellings of robbers are safe and secure. This is Job's original proposition, to which he all along adheres. It is, that God does not deal with men in this life according to their character; and in support of this, he now appeals to the fact that the tents or dwellings of robbers are safe. Arabia would furnish many illustrations of this, which could not be unknown to the friends of Job. The Arabs dwelt in tents, and they were then, as now, wandering, predatory tribes. They lived, to a great extent, by plunder, and doubtless Job could appeal to the observation of his friends for the proof of this. He affirms that so far from dealing with men according to their character, God often seemed to protect the public robber, and the blasphemer of his name. ¶ *Prosper.* They are secure, tranquil, at rest—for so the Hebrew word means. They are not disturbed and broken in upon. ¶ *And they that provoke God.* Or rather, "the tents are secure to those who provoke God." Dr. Good renders it, "and are fortresses to those who provoke God;" but the true idea is, that the tents of those who provoke God by their conduct are safe. God does not seem to notice them, or to come out in judgment against them. ¶ *Into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.* Dr. Noyes renders this, "who carry their God in their hand;" but with much less accuracy, as it seems to me, than commonly characterizes his version. Eichhorn renders it in a sense somewhat similar:

Die ihre Faust für ihre Gottheit achten—

"who regard their fist as their God."  
 And so Stühlman renders it:

Und wem die Faust für Gottheit gilt—

"and to whom the fist avails for their God;" that is, says he, Job means that this is the course of the world. Dr. Good renders it, "of him who hath

7 But ask now the beasts, and fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee; and the

created all these things with his hand,'—still less accurately. In order to this, he is obliged to suppose an error in the text, but without the slightest authority. Jerome renders it as in our version. The LXX "who provoke the Lord as if there would be no trial to them—*ἔρασιν αὐτῶν*—hereafter;" which certainly makes sense, but it was never obtained from the Hebrew. Rosenmüller renders it, "who have their own hand, *i. e.*, power, for God;" a description, says he, of a wicked and violent man who thinks it right for him to do as he pleases. It seems to me, however, that the common interpretation, which is the most simple, is most in accordance with the Hebrew, and with the drift of the passage. According to this, it means, that there is security to the man who lives to provoke that God who is constantly bringing to him in abundance the tokens of kindness. This is the fact on which Job is insisting—that God does not treat men in this world according to their real character, but that the wicked are prospered and the righteous are afflicted.

7. *But ask now the beasts.* Rosenmüller supposes that this appeal to the inferior creation should be regarded as connected with ver. 3, and that the intermediate verses are parenthetic. Zophar had spoken with considerable parade of the wisdom of God. He had said (ch. xi. 7, seq.) that the knowledge of God was higher than the heavens, and had professed (ver. 6) to have himself exalted views of the Most High. In reply to this, Job says that the views which Zophar had expressed, were the most commonplace imaginable. He need not pretend to be acquainted with the more exalted works of God, or appeal to them as if his knowledge corresponded with them. Even the lower creation—the brutes—the earth—the fishes—could teach him knowledge which he had not now. Even from their nature, properties, and modes of life, higher views might be obtained than Zophar had. Others suppose, that the meaning is, that in the distribution

of happiness, God is so far from observing moral relations, that even among the lower animals, the rapacious and the violent are prospered, and the gentle and the innocent are the victims. Lions, wolves, and panthers are prospered—the lamb, the kid, the gazelle, are the victims. Either of these views may suit the connexion, though the latter seems to me to be the more probable interpretation. The object of Job is, to show that rewards and punishments are not distributed according to character. This was so plain in his view as scarcely to admit of argument. It was seen all over the world, not only among men, but even in the brute creation. Everywhere the strong prey upon the weak; the fierce upon the tame; the violent upon the timid. Yet God does not come forth to destroy the lion and the hyæna, or to deliver the lamb and the gazelle from their grasp. Like robbers (ver. 6), lions, panthers, and wolves prowl upon the earth; and the eagle and the vulture from the air pounce upon the defenceless, and the great robbers of the deep prey upon the feeble, and still are prospered. What a striking illustration of the course of events among men, and of the relative condition of the righteous and the wicked! Nothing could be more pertinent to the design of Job than this appeal, and nothing was more in accordance with the whole structure of the argument in the poem, where wisdom is seen mainly to consist in the result of careful observation. ¶ *And they shall teach thee.* Shall teach thee that God does not treat all according to their character. He does not give security to the gentle, the tame, and the innocent, and punish the ferocious, the blood-thirsty, and the cruel. ¶ *And the fowls.* They shall give thee information of the point under discussion. Those that prey upon others—as the eagle and the vulture—are not exposed at once to the divine displeasure, and the tender and harmless are not protected. The general principle is illustrated in them, that the dealings of God

8 Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.

9 Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?

10 In whose hand is the <sup>1</sup> soul of every living thing, and the breath of all <sup>2</sup> mankind.

11 Doth not the ear try words? and the <sup>3</sup> mouth taste his meat?

<sup>1</sup> or, life.    <sup>2</sup> flesh of man.    <sup>3</sup> palate.

are not always in exact accordance with character.

8. *Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee.* Perhaps this appeal to the earth may mean, as Stuhlman supposes, that the same thing is shown in the productions of the earth, as in the case of fierce animals. Noxious weeds and useless plants are more thrifty than the plants which are useful, and the growth of poisonous or annoying things on the earth illustrates the same thing as the dealings of God with men—that his dealings are not in accordance with the real nature of objects. ¶ *And the fishes of the sea.* The same thing is manifested in the sea, where the mighty prey upon the feeble, and the fierce and the ferocious overcome the defenceless. The sentiment is, that it is a great principle which pervades all things, that the ferocious, the strong, the wicked, are often prospered, while the weak, the defenceless, the innocent, the pious, are subject to calamities, and that God does not apportion his dealings to the exact character of his creatures. Undoubtedly Job was right in this, and this general principle might be seen then, as now, to pervade the world.

9. *Who knoweth not in all these.* Who cannot see in all these the proofs of the same divine and sovereign agency? Who cannot see the hand of the same God, and the same great principles of administration? The meaning of Job is, that the position which he defends is so plain, that it may be learned from the very earth and the lowest orders of animals which God has made. ¶ *That the hand of the LORD hath wrought this.* In this place, the original word is יְהוָה, JEHOVAH. On the meaning of the word see Notes on Isaiah, ch. i. 2. The Chaldee also renders it here "—JAH.

It is remarkable that this is the only place where the name JEHOVAH occurs in poetical parts of the book of Job, in the printed editions. In ch. xxviii. 28, JEHOVAH is found in some manuscripts, though the word *Adonai* is in the printed copies. Eichhorn, Einleit. § 644, Note. In ch. xii. 9, the word JEHOVAH, though found in the printed editions, is wanting in nine ancient manuscripts. Dr. J. P. Wilson, on the "Hope of Immortality," p. 57. The word JEHOVAH constantly occurs in the historical parts of the book. On the argument derived from this, in regard to the antiquity of the book of Job, see the Introduction, § 4, iii. 3.

10. *In whose hand is the soul of every living thing.* Marg., *Life*. The margin is the more correct rendering. The idea is, that all are under the control of God. He gives life, and health, and happiness when he pleases, and when he chooses he takes them away. His sovereignty is manifested, says Job, in the inferior creation, or among the beasts of the field, the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of heaven. ¶ *And the breath of all mankind.* Marg., *Flesh of man*. The margin is in accordance with the Hebrew. The meaning is, that man is subjected to the same laws as the rest of the creation. God is a sovereign, and the same great principles of administration may be seen in all his works.

11. *Doth not the ear try words?* The literal meaning of this, which is evidently a proverbial expression, is plain; but about its bearing here there is more difficulty. The literal sense is, that it is the office of the ear to mark the distinction of sounds, and to convey the sense to the soul. But in regard to the exact bearing of this proverb on the case in hand, commentators have not been

12 With the ancient <sup>b</sup> is wisdom; and in length of days understanding.

<sup>b</sup> c. 32. 7.

agreed. Probably the sense is, that there ought to be a diligent attention to the signification of words, and to the meaning of a speaker, as one carefully tastes his food; and Job, perhaps, may be disposed to complain that his friends had not given that attention which they ought to have done to the true design and signification of his remarks. Or it may mean that man is endowed with the faculty of attending to the nature and qualities of objects, and that he ought to exercise that faculty in judging of the lessons which are taught respecting God or his works. ¶ *And the mouth.* Marg., as in the Heb., *ἡ—palate*. The word means not merely the palate, but the lower part of the mouth (*Gesenius*), and is especially used to designate the organ or the seat of taste. Ps. cxix. 103; Job vi. 30. ¶ *His meat.* Its food—the word *meat* being used in old English to denote all kinds of food. The sense is, man is endowed with the faculty of distinguishing what is wholesome from what is unwholesome, and he should, in like manner, exercise the faculty which God has given him of distinguishing the true from the false on moral subjects. He should not suppose that all that had been said, or that could be said, must necessarily be true. He should not suppose that merely to string together proverbs, and to utter commonplace suggestions, was a mark of true wisdom. He should separate the valuable from the worthless, the true from the false, and the wholesome from the injurious. Job complains that his friends had not done this. They had shown no power of discrimination or selection. They had uttered common-place apothegms, and they gathered adages of former times, without any discrimination, and had urged them in their arguments against him, whether pertinent or not. It was by this kind of irrelevant and miscellaneous remark that he felt that he had been mocked by his friends, ver. 4.

13 With <sup>1</sup> him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel <sup>c</sup> and understanding.

<sup>1</sup> i. e. God.

c Pr. 8. 14.

12. *With the ancient is wisdom.* With the aged. The word *ἄνθρωπος*, here used, means an old man, one grey-headed. It is used chiefly in poetry, and is commonly employed in the sense of one who is decrepid by age. It is rendered *very aged* in Job xv. 10; "*him that stooped for age*," 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17; "*very old*," Job xxxii. 6; and *the aged*, Job xxix. 8. The LXX render it, *Ἐν πολλῷ χρόνῳ*, *in much time*. The sense is, that wisdom might be expected to be found with the man who had had a long opportunity to observe the course of events; who had conversed with a former generation, and who had had time for personal reflection. This was in accordance with the ancient Oriental views, where knowledge was imparted mainly by tradition, and where wisdom depended much on the opportunity of personal observation. Comp. ch. xxxii. 7.

13. *With him is wisdom.* Marg., correctly, "*God*." However much wisdom there may seem to be with aged men, yet the true wisdom—that which was supreme and worthy of the name—was to be found in God alone. The object of Job was to lead the thoughts up to God, and to bring his friends to a contemplation of the wisdom which he manifests in his works. Accordingly, he goes on in the remainder of this chapter to state some of the illustrations of wisdom and power which God had exhibited, and particularly to show that he was a sovereign, and did his pleasure everywhere. He made all things; he sustains all things; he reverses the condition of men at his pleasure; he sets up whom he pleases, and when he chooses he casts them down. His works are contrary in many respects to what we should anticipate; and the sense of all is, that God was a holy and a righteous sovereign, and that such were the reverses under his administration, that we could not argue that he treated all according to their character on earth.




14 Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he shutteth <sup>1</sup> up a man, and there can be no opening.

15 Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up: also he sendeth them out, and they over-

<sup>1</sup> upon.

14. *Behold, he breaketh down.* None can repair what he pulls down. Cities and towns he can devote to ruin by fire, or earthquake, or the pestilence, and so completely destroy them that they can never be rebuilt. We may now refer to such illustrations as Sodom, Babylon, Petra, Tyre, Herculaneum, and Pompeii, as full proof of what is here affirmed. ¶ *He shutteth up a man.* He can shut up a man in such difficulties and straits that he cannot extricate himself. See ch. xi. 10. The Chaldee renders this, "he shuts up a man in the grave (בְּקִבְרוֹתָא) and it cannot be opened." But the more correct idea is, that God has complete control over a man, and that he can so hedge up his way that he cannot help himself.

15 *He withholdeth the waters.* From the clouds and springs. He has control over the rains and the fountains; and when these are withheld, rivers and lakes become dry. The Syriac renders

this, —if he rebuke the waters,

supposing that there might perhaps be an allusion to the drying up of the Red Sea, or the formation of a passage for the Israelites. But it is remarkable that in the argument here there is no allusion to any *historical* fact, not to the flood, or to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, or to the passage through the Red Sea, though these occurrences would have furnished so appropriate illustrations of the points under discussion. Is it to be inferred that Job had never heard of any of those events? Or may it have been that the lessons which they were adapted to teach had been actually embodied in the proverbs which he was using, and furnished well known illustrations or the *basis* of such apo-

turn the earth.

16 With him *is* strength and wisdom: the deceived <sup>d</sup> and the deceiver *are* his.

17 He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges <sup>e</sup> fools.

<sup>d</sup> Ezek. 14. 9.    <sup>e</sup> Is. 19. 13.

thegms? ¶ *He sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.* Such inundations may have occurred in the swollen torrents of Arabia, and indeed are so common everywhere as to furnish a striking illustration of the power and sovereign agency of God.

16. *The deceived and the deceiver are his.* This is designed to teach that all classes of men are under his control. All are dependent on him, and all are subject to him. He has power to keep them, and he can destroy them when he pleases. Dr. Good supposes that Job refers here to himself and his friends who had beguiled him into expressions of impatience and complaint. But it is more probably a *general* declaration that all classes of men were under the control of God.

17. *He leadeth counsellors away spoiled.* Plundered or captive. That is, the counsels of wise and great men do not avail against God. Statesmen who promised themselves victory as the result of their plans he disappoints, and leads away into captivity. The object of this is to show that God is superior over all, and also that men are not dealt with in exact accordance with their character and rank. God is a sovereign, and he shows his sovereignty when defeating the counsels and purposes of the wisest of men, and overturning the plans of the mighty. ¶ *And maketh the judges fools.* He leaves them to distracted and foolish plans. He leaves them to the adoption of measures which result in their own ruin. He is a sovereign, having control over the minds of the great, and power to defeat all their counsels, and to render them infatuated. Nothing can be clearer than this. Nothing has been more frequently illus-

18 He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.

19 He <sup>f</sup> leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.

20 He removeth <sup>g</sup> away the <sup>1</sup>

*f* Is. 45. 1. *g* Is. 3. 1—3. <sup>1</sup> *lip of the faithful.*

trated in the history of nations. In accordance with this belief is the well-known expression:

“Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.”

“Whom God purposes to destroy, he first infatuates.”

18. *He looseth the bond of kings.* The bond of kings (מֶלֶךְ) here means that by which they bind others. Their power over others he loosens or takes away. ¶ *And girdeth their loins with a girdle.* That is, he girds them with a rope or cord, and leads them away as prisoners. The whole series of remarks here refers to the reverses and changes in the conditions of life. The meaning here is, that the bonds of authority which they imposed on others are unbound, and that their own loins are bound with a girdle, not a girdle of royal dignity and ornament, but such a one as they are bound with who are servants, or who travel. *Pict. Bib.*

19. *He leadeth princes away spoiled.* That is, plundered. The word here rendered “princes” (כֹּהֲנִים) means, properly, *priests*, and it is usually so rendered in the Scriptures. The ancient Hebrew interpreters suppose that the word sometimes also means *prince*. The Chaldee Paraphrast has not unfrequently so rendered it, using the word נָזַר to express it. Gen. xli. 45; Ps. cx. 4. In this place, the Vulgate renders it, *sacerdotes*; and the LXX, *ιερείς, priests*. So Luther renders it, *Priester*. So Castelleo. It can be applied to princes or statesmen, only because *priests* were frequently engaged in performing the functions of civil officers, and were, in fact, to a certain extent, officers of the government. But it seems to me that it is to be taken in its usual significa-

speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged.

21 He <sup>h</sup> poureth contempt upon princes, and <sup>2</sup> weakeneth the strength of the mighty.

*h* Da. 2. 21, 22.

<sup>2</sup> or, *looseth the girdle of the strong.*

tion, and that it means, that even the ministers of religion were at the control of God, and were subject to the same reverses as other men of distinction and power. ¶ *And overthroweth.* The word here used (הִפֵּץ) has the notion of slipping, or gliding. So in Arabic, the word سَلَفَ, means, to slip by, and to besmear. See Prov. xiii. 6: “Wickedness overthroweth (הִפֵּץ) causes to slip) the sinner.” Comp. Prov. xxi. 12, xxii. 12. Here it means to overthrow, to prostrate. The most mighty chieftains cannot stand firm before him, but they glide away and fall.

20. *He removeth away the speech of the trusty.* Marg., *lip of the faithful.* “He takes away the lip,” i. e., he takes away the power of giving safe counsel or good advice. The “trusty” or “faithful” here refers to those of age and experience, and on whose counsel men are accustomed to rely. The meaning here is, that their most sagacious anticipations are disappointed, their wisest schemes are foiled. They fail in their calculations of the course of events, and the arrangements of Providence are such that they could not anticipate what was to occur. ¶ *The understanding of the aged.* To whom the young were accustomed to look up with deference and respect. The meaning here is, that they who were accustomed to give wise and sound advice, if left by God, give vain and foolish counsels.

21. *He poureth contempt upon princes.* He has power to hurl them from their thrones, and to overwhelm them with disgrace. ¶ *And weakeneth the strength of the mighty.* Marg., as in Heb., *looseth the girdle of the strong.* The Orientals wore loose flowing robes, which were secured by a girdle around the loins.

22 He discovereth<sup>i</sup> deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow<sup>k</sup> of death.

23 He increaseth<sup>l</sup> the nations, and destroyeth them; he enlargeth the nations, and<sup>l</sup> straiteneth

<sup>i</sup> 1 Co. 4. 5.      <sup>k</sup> c. 34. 22.      <sup>l</sup> Ps. 107. 38.  
<sup>l</sup> *leadeth in.*

When they laboured, ran, or travelled, their robes were girded up. But this is common everywhere. Wrestlers, leapers, and runners put a girdle around them, and are able thus to accomplish much more than they otherwise could. To loosen that, is to weaken them. So Job says that God had power to loosen the strength of the mighty. He here seems to labour for expressions, and varies the form of the image in every way to show the absolute control which God has over men, and the fact that his power is seen in the reverses of mankind. Lucretius has a passage strongly resembling this in the general sentiment:

"Usque adeo res humanas vis abdita quædam  
Obterit; et pulchros fasces, sævasque secures,  
Proculcare, atque ludibrio sibi habere, videtur."  
Lib. v. 1232.

"So from his awful shades, some Power unseen  
O'erthrows all human greatness! Treads to dust

Rods, ensigns, crowns — the proudest pomps of state;  
And laughs at all the mockery of man!"

Good.

22. *He discovereth deep things out of darkness.* That is, God discloses truths which are wholly beyond the power of man to discover—truths that seem to be hidden in profound night. This may refer either to the revelation which God was believed to have furnished, or to his power of bringing out the most secret thoughts and purposes, or to his power of predicting future events by bringing them out of darkness to the clear light of day, or to his power of detecting plots, intrigues, and conspiracies. ¶ *And bringeth out to light the shadow of death.* On the meaning of the word rendered "shadow of death," see Notes on ch. iii. 5. It here denotes whatever is dark or obscure. It is rather a favourite expression with the

them *again*.

24 He taketh away the heart<sup>m</sup> of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness *where there is no way*.

m Da. 4. 16, 33.

author of this poem, (see ch. x. 22, xvi. 16, xxiv. 17, xxxiv. 22, xxxviii. 17,) though it occurs elsewhere in the Scriptures. The deepest darkness, the obscurest night, are represented by it; and the idea is, that even from the most dark and impenetrable regions God could bring out light and truth. All is naked and open to the mind of God.

23. *He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them.* He has entire control over them. The sources of prosperity are in his hand, and at his pleasure he can visit them with famine, pestilence, or war, and diminish their numbers, and arrest their prosperity. Dr. Good renders this very improperly, "He letteth the nations grow licentious;" but the word *רָבַח* never has this sense. It means, to make great, to multiply, to increase. ¶ *And straiteneth them again.* Marg., *leadeth in*. So the word *רָבַח* means. The idea is, that he increases a nation so that it spreads abroad beyond its usual limits, and then at his pleasure *leads* them back again, or *confines* them within the limits whence they had emigrated.

24. *He taketh away the heart.* The word *heart* here evidently means mind, intelligence, wisdom. See Notes on ver. 3. ¶ *Of the chief of the people.* Heb. "Heads of the people;" that is, of the rulers of the earth. The meaning is, that he leaves them to infatuated and distracted counsels. By withdrawing from them, he has power to frustrate their plans, and to leave them to an entire want of wisdom. See Notes on ver. 17. ¶ *And causeth them to wander in a wilderness.* They are like persons in a vast waste of pathless sands without a waymark, a guide, or a path. The perplexity and confusion of the great ones of the earth could not be more

25 They grope <sup>n</sup> in the dark without light, and he maketh

<sup>n</sup> De. 28. 29.

strikingly represented than by the condition of such a lost traveller.

25. *They grope in the dark.* They are like persons who attempt to feel their way along in the dark. Comp. Notes on Isa. lix. 10. ¶ *And he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.* Marg., *wander.* Their unstable and perplexed counsels are like the reelings of a drunken man. See Notes on Isa. xix. 14, xxiv. 20. This closes the chapter, and with it the controversy in regard to the ability to adduce pertinent and striking proverbial expressions. See Notes on ver. 3. Job had showed them that he was as familiar with proverbs respecting God as they were, and

them to <sup>1</sup> stagger like a drunken man.

<sup>1</sup> *wander.*

that he entertained as exalted ideas of the control and government of the Most High as they did. It may be added, that these *are* sublime and beautiful expressions respecting God. They surpass all that can be found in the writings of the heathen, and they show that somehow in the earliest ages there prevailed views of God which the human mind for ages afterwards, and in the most favourable circumstances, was not capable of originating. These proverbial sayings were doubtless fragments of revealed truth, which had come down by tradition, and which were thus embodied in a form convenient to be transmitted from age to age.

## CHAPTER XIII.

**L**O, mine eye hath seen all *this*, mine ear hath heard and understood it.

2 What ye know, *the same* do I know also: I *am* not inferior unto you.

1. *Lo, mine eye hath seen all this.* I have seen illustrations of all that I have said, or that you have said about the methods of divine providence.

2. *What ye know, &c.* See Note on ch. xii. 3.

3. *Surely I would speak to the Almighty.* I would desire to carry my cause directly up to God, and spread out my reasons before him. This Job often professed to desire. See ch. ix. 34, 35. He felt that God would appreciate the arguments which he would urge, and would do justice to them. His friends, he felt, were censorious and severe. They neither did justice to his feelings, nor to his motives. They perverted his words and arguments, and

3 Surely I would speak to the Almighty, <sup>a</sup> and I desire to reason <sup>b</sup> with God.

4 But ye *are* forgers of lies, ye *are* all physicians of no <sup>c</sup> value.

<sup>a</sup> c. 23. 3. 31. 35.

<sup>b</sup> Is. 1. 18. Mi. 6. 2, &c. <sup>c</sup> c. 16. 2.

instead of consoling him, they only aggravated his trials, and caused him to sink into deeper sorrows. But he felt if he could carry his cause to God, he would do ample justice to him and his cause. The views which he entertained of his friends he proceeds to state at considerable length, and without much reserve, in the following verses.

4. *But ye are forgers of lies.* The word *lies* here seems to be used in a large sense, to denote sophisms, false accusations, errors. They maintained false positions; they did not see the exact truth in respect to the divine dealings, and to the character of Job. They maintained strenuously that Job was a hypocrite, and that God was

5 O that ye would altogether hold your peace! and <sup>d</sup> it should be your wisdom.

6 Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.

*d* Pr. 17. 28. *Am.* 5. 13.

punishing him for his sins. They maintained that God deals with men in exact accordance with their character in this world, all of which Job regarded as false doctrine, and asserted that they defended it with sophistical arguments invented for the purpose, and thus they could be spoken of as "forgers of lies."

¶ *Physicians of no value.* The meaning is, that they had come to give him consolation, but nothing that they had said had imparted comfort. They were like physicians sent for to visit the sick, who could do nothing when they came. Comp. ch. xvi. 2.

5. *O that ye would altogether hold your peace!* You would show your wisdom by silence. Since you can say nothing that is adapted to give comfort, or to explain the true state of the case, it would be wise to say nothing. Comp. Prov. xvii. 28: "Even a fool when he holdeth his peace is counted wise."

7. *Will ye speak wickedly for God?* That is, will you maintain unjust principles with a view to honor or to vindicate God? Job refers, doubtless, to the positions which they had defended in regard to the divine administration—principles which he regarded as unjust, though they had employed them professedly in vindicating God. The sense is, that unjust principles ought not to be advanced to vindicate God. The great cause of truth and justice should always be maintained, and even in attempting to vindicate the divine administration, we ought to make use of no arguments which are not based on that which is right and true. Job means to reproach his friends with having, in their professed vindication of God, advanced sentiments which were at war with truth and justice, and which were full of fallacy and sophistry. And is this never done now? Are **sophistical arguments** never employed

7 Will ye speak wickedly <sup>e</sup> for God? and talk deceitfully <sup>f</sup> for him?

8 Will ye accept his person? will ye contend for God?

*e* c. 32. 21, 22.

*f* 2 Co. 4. 2.

in attempting to vindicate the divine government? Do we never state principles in regard to him which we should esteem to be unjust and dishonorable if applied to man? Do not good men sometimes feel that that government must be defended at all events; and when they can see no reason for the divine dealings, do they not make attempts at vindicating them, which are merely designed to throw dust in the eyes of an opponent, and which are known to be sophistical in their nature? It is wrong to employ a sophistical argument on any subject; and in reasoning on the divine character and dealings, when we come, as we often do, to points which we cannot understand, it is best to confess it. God asks no weak or sophistical argument in his defence; still less can he be pleased with an argument, though in defence of his government, which is based on unjust principles. ¶ *And talk deceitfully for him?* Use fallacies and sophisms in attempting to vindicate him. Everything in speaking of God should be true, pure, and sound. Every argument should be free from any appearance of sophism, and should be such as will bear the test of the most thorough examination. No honor is done to God by sophistical arguments, nor can he be pleased when such arguments are employed even to vindicate and honor his character.

8. *Will ye accept his person?* That is, will ye be partial to him? The language is such as is used in relation to courts of justice, where a judge shows favor to one of the parties on account of birth, rank, wealth, or personal friendship. The idea here is, "will you, from partiality to God, maintain unjust principles, and defend positions which are really untenable? There was a controversy between Job and

God. Job maintained that he was punished too severely; that the divine dealings were unequal and disproportioned to his offences. His friends, he alleges, have not done justice to the arguments which he had urged, but had taken sides with God against *him*, no matter what he urged or what he said. So little disposed were they to do justice to him and to listen to his vindication, that no matter what he said, they set it all down to impatience, rebellion, and insubmission. They assumed that he was wrong, and that God was wholly right in all things. Of this position that God was right, no one could reasonably complain, and in his sober reflections Job himself would not be disposed to object to it; but his complaint is, that though the considerations which he urged were of the greatest weight, they would not allow their force, simply because they were *determined* to vindicate God. Their position was, that God dealt with men strictly according to their character; and that no matter what they suffered, their sufferings were the exact measure of their ill desert. Against this position, they would hear nothing that Job could say; and they maintained it by every kind of argument which was at their command—whether sound or unsound, sophistical or solid. Job says that this was showing *partiality* for God, and he felt that he had a right to complain. We need never show “partiality” even for God. He can be vindicated by just and equal arguments; and we need never injure others while we vindicate him. Our arguments for him should, indeed, be reverent, and we should *desire* to vindicate his character and government; but the considerations which we urge need not be those of mere partiality and favor. ¶ *Will ye contend for God?* Language taken from a court of justice, and referring to an argument in favor of a party or cause. Job asks whether *they* would undertake to maintain the cause of God, and he may mean to intimate that they were wholly disqualified for such an undertaking. He not only reproves them for a want of candor and impartiality, as in the previous expres-

sions, but he means to say that they were unfitted in all respects to be the advocates of God. They did not understand the principles of his administration. Their views were narrow, their information limited, and their arguments either commonplace or unsound. According to this interpretation, the emphasis will be on the word “*ye*”—“will *YE* contend for God?” The whole verse may mean, “God is not to be defended by mere partiality or favor. Solid arguments only should be employed in his cause. Such you have not used, and you have shown yourselves to be entirely unfitted for this great argument.” The practical inference which *we* should draw from this is, that our arguments in defence of the divine administration should be solid and sound. They should not be mere declamation, or mere assertion. They should be such as will become the great theme, and such as will stand the test of any proper trial that can be applied to reasoning. There *are* arguments which will “vindicate all God’s ways to men;” and to search them out should be one of the great employments of our lives. If ministers of the gospel would always abide by these principles, they would often do much more than they do now to commend religion to the sober views of mankind. No men are under greater temptations to use weak or unsound arguments than they are. They feel it to be their duty at all hazards to defend the divine administration. They are in circumstances where their arguments will not be subjected to the searching process which an argument at the bar will be, where a keen and interested opponent is on the alert, and will certainly sift every argument which is urged. Either by inability to explain the difficulties of the divine government, or by indolence in searching out arguments, or by presuming on the ignorance and dulness of their hearers, or by a pride which will not allow them to confess their ignorance on any subject, they are in danger of attempting to *hide* a difficulty which they cannot explain, or of using arguments and resorting to reasoning, which would be regarded as unsound or worth-

9 Is it good that he should search you out? or as one man mocketh another, do ye so mock <sup>s</sup> him?

10 He will surely reprove you,

*g* Ga. 6. 7.

less anywhere else. A minister should always remember that sound reasoning is as necessary in religion as in other things, and that there are always some men who can detect a fallacy or see through sophistry. With what diligent study, then, should the ministers of the gospel prepare for their work! How careful should they be, as the advocates of God and his cause in a world opposed to him, to find out solid arguments, and to meet with candor every objection, and to convince men, by sound reasoning, that God is right! Their work is to convince, not to denounce; and if there is any office of unspeakable responsibility on earth, it is that of undertaking to be the advocates of God.

9. *Is it good that he should search you out?* Would it be well for you if he should go into an investigation of your character, and of the arguments which you adduce? The idea is, that if God should make such an investigation, the result would be highly unfavorable to them. Perhaps Job means to intimate that, if they were subjected to the kind of trial that he had been, it would be seen that they could not bear it. ¶ *Or as one man mocketh another.* The idea here is, "it is possible to delude or deceive man, but God cannot be deceived. You may conceal your thoughts and motives from man, but you cannot from God. You may use arguments that may impose upon man—you may employ fallacies and sophisms which he cannot detect, but every such effort is vain with God." Comp. Gal. vi. 7.

10. *He will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons.* If you show partiality, you will incur his disapprobation. This seems to have much of a proverbial cast, and to mean that under no possible circumstances was it right to show partiality. No matter for whom it may be done, it will be dis-

pleasing to God. Even if it be in favor of the righteous, the widow, the fatherless, or of himself, if there is not a disposition to judge according to truth and evidence, God will frown upon you. No matter who the parties might be; no matter what their rank; no matter what friendship there might be for one or the other of them, it was never to be assumed that one was right and the other wrong without evidence. The exact truth was to be sought after, and the judgment made up accordingly. Even when God was one of the parties, the same course was to be pursued. His character was capable of being successfully vindicated, and he would not be pleased to have his cause defended or decided by partiality, or by mere favor. Hence he encourages men to bring forth their strong reasons, and to adduce all that can be said against his government and laws. See Notes on Isa. xli. 1—21.

11 Shall not his excellency make you afraid? <sup>i</sup> and his dread fall upon you?

*h* Ps. 82. 1, 2.

*i* Jer. 5. 22. 10. 7, 10.

pleasing to God. Even if it be in favor of the righteous, the widow, the fatherless, or of himself, if there is not a disposition to judge according to truth and evidence, God will frown upon you. No matter who the parties might be; no matter what their rank; no matter what friendship there might be for one or the other of them, it was never to be assumed that one was right and the other wrong without evidence. The exact truth was to be sought after, and the judgment made up accordingly. Even when God was one of the parties, the same course was to be pursued. His character was capable of being successfully vindicated, and he would not be pleased to have his cause defended or decided by partiality, or by mere favor. Hence he encourages men to bring forth their strong reasons, and to adduce all that can be said against his government and laws. See Notes on Isa. xli. 1—21.

11. *Shall not his excellency. His exaltation* (~~from~~ <sup>from</sup> ~~his~~ <sup>his</sup> to exalt, to lift up), or his majesty. Gen. xlix. 3. ¶ *Make you afraid?* Fill you with awe and reverence. Shall it not restrain you from fallacy, from sophisms, and from all presumptuous and unfounded reasoning. The sense here is, that a sense of the greatness and majesty of God should fill the mind with solemnity and reverence, and make us serious and sincere; should repress all declamation and mere assertion, and should lead us to adduce only those considerations which will bear the test of the final trial. The general proposition, however, is not less clear, that a sense of the majesty and glory of God should at all times fill the mind with solemn awe, and produce the deepest veneration. See Jer. v. 22; x. 7—10; Gen. xxviii. 17. ¶ *And his dread.* The fear of him. You should so stand in awe of him as not to advance

12 Your remembrances *are* like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay.

any sentiments which he will not approve, or which will not bear the test of examination. Rosenmüller, however, and after him Noyes, supposes that this is not so much a declaration of what *ought* to be, implying that the fear of God *ought* to produce veneration, as a declaration of what actually occurred—implying that they were actually influenced by this slavish fear in what they said. According to this, it means that they were actuated only by a dread of what God would do to them that led them to condemn Job without proof, and not by a regard to truth. But the common interpretation seems to me most in accordance with the meaning of the passage.

12. *Your remembrances are like unto ashes.* There has been a considerable variety in the interpretation of this verse. The meaning in our common version is certainly not very clear. The Vulgate renders it, *Memoria vestra comparabitur cineri*. The LXX, Ἀποθήσεται δὲ ὑμῶν τὸ γαστήριον ὡς σποδὴν—*your boasting shall pass away like ashes*. Dr. Good renders it, "Dust are your stored-up sayings." Noyes, "Your maxims are words of dust." The word rendered *remembrances* (מִזְכָּרִים) means, properly, *remembrance, memory*, Josh. iv. 7; Ex. xii. 14; then *a memento, or record*; then *a memorable saying, a maxim*. This is probably the meaning here; and the reference is to the apothegms or proverbs which they had so profusely uttered, and which they regarded as so profound and worthy of attention, but which Job was disposed to regard as most common-place, and to treat with contempt. ¶ *Are like unto ashes.* That is, they are valueless. See Notes on Isa. xlv. 20. Their maxims had about the same relation to true wisdom which ashes have to substantial and nutritious food. The Hebrew here (מִזְכָּרִים) is rather, "are parables of ashes;" the word אֵשׁ, meaning simili-

13 <sup>1</sup> Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may speak, and let come on me what *will*.

<sup>1</sup> *be silent from me.*

tude, parable, proverb. This interpretation gives more force and beauty to the passage. ¶ *Your bodies*, בָּשָׂר. Vulg., *cervices*. Sept. τὸ δὲ σῶμα πῆλινον, *but the body is clay*. The Hebrew word, בָּשָׂר, means something *gibbous*, (whence the word *gibbous* is derived,) convex, arched; hence the *back* of animals or men, Ezek. x. 12; the boss of a shield or buckler—the *gibbous*, or exterior convex part—Job xv. 26; and then, according to Gesenius, an entrenchment, a fortress, a stronghold. According to this interpretation, the passage here means, that the arguments behind which they entrenched themselves were like clay. They could not resist an attack made upon them, but would be easily thrown down, like mud walls. Grotius renders it, "Your towers [of defence] are tumuli of clay." Rosenmüller remarks on the verse, that the ancients were accustomed to inscribe sentences of valuable historical facts on pillars. If these were engraved on stone, they would be permanent; if on pillars covered with clay, they would soon be obliterated. On a pillar or column at Alexandria, the architect cut his own name at the base deep in the stone. On the plaster or stucco with which the column was covered, he inscribed the name of the person to whose honor it was reared. The consequence was, that that name became soon obliterated; his own then appeared, and was permanent. But the meaning here is, rather, that the apothegms and maxims behind which they entrenched themselves were like mud walls, and could not withstand an attack.

13. *Hold your peace.* Marg., *Be silent from me.* See ver. 5. It is possible that Job may have perceived in them some disposition to interrupt him in a rude manner in reply to the severe remarks which he had made, and he asked the privilege, therefore, of being permitted to go on, and to say what he intended, let come what would. ¶ *And let come*



14 Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my

on me what will. Anything, whether reproaches from you, or additional sufferings from the hand of God. Allow me to express my sentiments, whatever may be the consequences to myself. One cannot but be forcibly reminded by this verse of the remark of the Greek philosopher, "Strike, but hear me."

14. *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth.* The meaning of the proverbial expressions in this verse is not very clear. They indicate a state of great danger; but the exact sense of the proverbs it has been difficult to ascertain. Some have supposed that the phrase, "to take the flesh in the teeth," is significant of a state of famine, where a man dying from this cause would seize upon his own flesh and devour it; others, that it refers to the contentions of voracious animals, struggling for a piece of flesh; others, that it refers to the fact that what is borne in the teeth is liable to be dropped, and that Job regarded his life as in such a perilous condition. Schultens regards it as denoting that bold courage in which a man exposes his life to imminent peril. He supposes that it is to be taken in connexion with the previous verse, as intimating that he would go forward and speak at any rate, whatever might be the result. He translates it, "Whatever may be the event, I will take my flesh in my teeth, and my life in my hand." In this interpretation, Rosenmüller concurs. Noyes renders it, "I will count it nothing to bear my flesh in my teeth." Good, "Let what may—I will carry my flesh in my teeth;" and supposes that the phrase is equivalent to saying, that he would incur any risk or danger. The proverb he supposes is taken from the contest which so frequently takes place between dogs and other carnivorous quadrupeds, when one of them is carrying a bone or piece of flesh in his mouth, which becomes a source of dispute, and a prize to be fought for. The Vulgate renders it, *Quare lacero carnes meas dentibus meis.* The LXX, "Taking my

life in mine hand?

flesh in my teeth, I will put my life in my hand." It seems to me that the language is to be taken in connexion with the previous verse, and is not to be regarded as an interrogatory, but as a declaration. "Let come upon me anything—whatever it may be, *קָח*, (ver. 13,) on account of that, or in reference to that, *קָחָהּ*, (ver. 14,) I will take my life in my hand, braving any and every danger." It is a firm and determined purpose that he would express his sentiments, no matter what might occur—even if it involved the peril of his life. The word "*flesh*" I take to be synonymous with *life*, or with his best interests; and the figure is probably taken from the fact that animals thus carry their prey or spoil in their teeth. Of course, this would be a poor protection. It would be liable to be seized by others. It might even tempt and provoke others to seize it; and would lead to conflict and perils. So Job felt that the course he was pursuing would lead him into danger, but he was determined to pursue it, let come what might. ¶ *And put my life in mine hand.* This is a proverbial expression, meaning the same as, I will expose myself to danger. Anything of value taken in the hand is liable to be rudely snatched away. It is like taking a casket of jewels, or a purse of gold, in the hand, which may at any moment be seized by robbers. The phrase is not uncommon in the Scriptures to denote exposure to great peril. Comp. Ps. cxix. 109, "My soul is continually in my hand." 1 Sam. xix. 5, "For he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine." Judges xii. 3, "I put my life in my hands, and passed over against the children of Ammon." A similar expression occurs in the Greek classics, denoting exposure to imminent danger—*ἐν τῇ χειρὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἔχει*—*he has his life in his hand.* See Rosenmüller on Ps. cxix. 109. The Arabs have a somewhat similar proverb, as quoted by Schultens, "His flesh is upon a butcher's block."

15 Though \* he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will

\* Ps. 23. 4. Pr. 14. 32.

15. *Though he slay me.* "God may so multiply my sorrows and pains that I cannot survive them. I see that I may be exposed to increased calamities, yet I am willing to meet them. If, in maintaining my own cause, and showing that I am not a hypocrite (ver. 18), it should so happen that my sufferings should be so increased that I should die, yet I will do it." The word *slay*, or *kill*, here refers to temporal death. It has no reference to punishment in the future world, or to the death of the soul. It means merely that Job was determined to maintain his cause and defend his character, though his sufferings should be so increased that life would be the forfeit. Such was the extent of his sufferings, that he had reason to suppose that they would terminate in death; and yet, notwithstanding this, it was his fixed purpose to confide in God. Comp. Notes on ch. xix. 25—27. This was spoken in Job's better moments, and was his deliberate and prevailing intention. This deliberate purpose expresses what was really the character of the man, though occasionally, when he became impatient, he gave utterance to different sentiments and feelings. We are to look to the prevailing and habitual tenor of a man's feelings and declared principles, in order to determine what his character is, and not to expressions made under the influence of temptation, or under the severity of pain. On the sentiment here expressed, comp. Ps. xxiii. 4; Prov. xiv. 32. ¶ *Yet will I trust in him.* The word here used (חָתַם) means, properly, to wait, stay, delay; and it usually conveys the idea of *waiting* on one with an expectation of aid or help. Hence it means, to hope. The sense here is, that his expectation or hope was in God; and if the sense expressed in our common version be correct, it implies that even *in* death, or *after* death, he would confide in God. He would adhere to him, and would still feel that beyond death he would bless

<sup>1</sup> maintain mine own ways before him.

<sup>1</sup> *prove, or, argue.*

him. ¶ *In him.* In God. But there is here an important variation in the reading. The present Hebrew is  $\text{אֵלַי}$ —*not*. The *keri*, or marginal reading, is  $\text{בְּיָמָיו}$ —*in him*. Jerome renders it as if it were  $\text{בְּיָמָיו}$ —*in ipso*, that is, in him. The LXX followed some reading which does not now appear in any copies of the Hebrew text, or which was the result of mere imagination: "Though the Almighty, as he hath begun, may subdue me— $\chi\epsilon\iota\rho\acute{\omega}\sigma\mu\alpha\iota$ —yet will I speak, and maintain my cause before him." The Chaldee renders it,  $\text{אֲדַבֵּר בְּפָנָיו}$ , *I will pray before him*; evidently reading it as if it were  $\text{בְּיָמָיו}$ , *in him*. So the Syriac,

$\text{אֵלַי}$ , *in him*. I have no doubt, therefore, that this was the ancient reading, and that the true sense is retained in our common version; though Rosenmüller, Good, Noyes, and others have adopted the other reading, and suppose that it is to be taken as a negative. Noyes renders it, "Lo! he slayeth me, and I have no hope!" Good, much worse, "Should he even slay me, I would not delay." It may be added, that there are frequent instances where  $\text{אֵלַי}$  and  $\text{בְּיָמָיו}$  are interchanged, and where the copyist seems to have been determined by the *sound* rather than by a careful inspection of the letters. According to the Masorites, there are fifteen places where  $\text{אֵלַי}$ , *not*, is written for  $\text{בְּיָמָיו}$ , *to him*. Ex. xxi. 8; Lev. xi. 21; xxv. 30; 1 Sam. ii. 3; 2 Sam. xvi. 18; Ps. c. 3; cxxxix. 16; Job xiii. 15; xli. 4; Ezra iv. 2; Prov. xix. 7; xxvi. 2; Isa. ix. 2; lxiii. 9. On the other hand,  $\text{בְּיָמָיו}$  is put for  $\text{אֵלַי}$  in 1 Sam. ii. 16; xx. 2, Job vi. 21. A mistake of this kind may have easily occurred here. The *sentiment* here expressed is one of the noblest that could fall from the lips of man. It indicates unwavering confidence in God, even in death. It is the determination

16 He also *shall be my salvation*: <sup>1</sup> for an hypocrite <sup>m</sup> shall not come before him.

*l* Ps. 27. 1. *m* Is. 33. 14.

of a mind to adhere to him, though he should strip away comfort after comfort, and though there should be no respite to his sorrows until he should sink down in death. This is the highest expression of piety, and this it is the privilege of the friends of God to experience. When professed earthly friends become cold towards us, our love for them also is chilled. Should they leave and forsake us in the midst of suffering and want, and especially should they leave us on a bed of death, we should cease to confide in them. But not so in respect to God. Such is the nature of our confidence in him, that though he takes away comfort after comfort, though our health is destroyed and our friends are removed, and though we are led down into the valley and the shadow of death, yet still we never lose our confidence in him. We feel that all will yet be well. We look forward to another state, and anticipate the blessedness of another and a better world. Reader, can *you* in sincerity lift the eye toward God, and say to him, "Though Thou dost slay me, though comfort after comfort is taken away, though the waves of trouble roll over me, and though I go down into the valley of the shadow of death, yet I WILL TRUST IN THEE;—Thine I will be even then, and when all is dark I will believe that God is right, and just, and true, and good, and will never doubt that he is worthy of my eternal affection and praise?" Such is religion. Where else is it found but in the views of God and of his government which the Bible reveals? The infidel may have apathy in his sufferings, the blasphemer may be stupid, the moralist or the formalist may be unconcerned; but that is not to have confidence in God. That results from religion alone. ¶ *But I will maintain mine own ways before him.* Marg., *prove, or argue.* The sense is, I will vindicate my ways, or myself. That is, I will maintain that I am his friend, and that I am not a hypocrite. His friends

17 Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears.

charged him with insincerity. They were not able, Job supposed, to appreciate his arguments and to do justice to him. He had, therefore, expressed the wish to carry his cause directly before God, (ver. 3;) and he was assured that He would do justice to his arguments. Even should he slay him, he would still stand up as his friend, and would still maintain that his calamities had not come upon him, as his friends supposed, because he was a hypocrite and a secret enemy of his Maker.

16. *He also shall be my salvation.* See Notes on Is. xii. 2. Literally, "He is unto me for salvation," that is, "I put my trust in him, and he will save me. The opportunity of appearing before God, and of maintaining my cause in his presence, will result in my deliverance from the charges which are alleged against me. I shall be able there to show that I am not a hypocrite, and God will become my defender." ¶ *For an hypocrite shall not come before him.* This seems to be a proverb, or a statement of a general and indisputable principle. Job admitted this to be true. Yet he expected to be able to vindicate himself before God, and this would *prove* that he was not an hypocrite—on the general principle that a man who was permitted to stand before God and to obtain his favor, could not be an unrighteous man. To God he looked with confidence; and God, he had no doubt, would be his defender. *This fact* would prove that he could not be an hypocrite, as his friends maintained.

17. *Hear diligently my speech.* That which I have made; that is, the declaration which I have made of my innocence. He refers to his solemn declaration, (ver. 15, 16,) that he had unwavering confidence in God, and that even should God slay him, he would put confidence in him. This solemn appeal he wished them to attend to as one of the utmost importance.

18 Behold now, I have ordered **my** cause: I know that I shall be justified.

19 Who <sup>n</sup> *is* he *that* will plead

*n* Is. 50, 8. Ro. 8, 33, 34.

18. *I have ordered my cause.* Literally, "judgment."—מִשְׁפָּט. The LXX render it, "I am near (*ἐγγύς εἰμι*) to my judgment," or my trial. The meaning may be, that he had gone through the pleading, and had said what he wished in self-vindication, and he was willing to leave the cause with God, and did not doubt the issue. Or more probably, I think, the word מִשְׁפָּט should be taken, as the word מִשְׁפָּטִי is, in the *present* tense, meaning, "I now set in order my cause; I enter on the pleading; I am confident that I shall so present it as to be declared righteous." ¶ *I know that I shall be justified.* I have no doubt as to the issue. I shall be declared to be an holy man, and not a hypocrite. The word rendered, "I shall be justified," (מִשְׁפָּטִי) is used here in the proper and literal sense of the word *justifying*. It is a term of law, and means, "I shall be declared to be righteous. I shall be shown not to be guilty in the form charged on me, and shall be acquitted or vindicated." This sense is different from that which so often occurs in the Scriptures when applied to the doctrine of the justification of a sinner. Then it means, *to treat one AS IF he were righteous, though he is personally guilty and undeserving.*

19. *Who is he that will plead with me?* That is, "who is there now that will take up the cause, and enter into an argument against me? I have set my cause before God. I appeal now to all to take up the argument against me, and have no fear if they do, as to the result. I am confident of a successful issue, and await calmly the divine adjudication." ¶ *For now, if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.* This translation, in my view, by no means expresses the sense of the original, if indeed it is not exactly the reverse. According to this version, the meaning

with me? for now, if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.

20 Only do not two *things* unto me: then will I not hide myself from thee.

is, that if he did not go into a vindication of himself, he would die. The Hebrew, however, is, "for now I will be silent, and die." That is, "I have maintained my cause, I will say no more. If there is any one who can successfully contend with me, and can prove that my course cannot be vindicated, then I have no more to say. I will be silent, and die. I will submit to my fate without further argument, and without a murmur. I have said all that needs to be said, and nothing would remain but to submit and die."

20. *Only do not two things unto me.* The two things which are specified in the following verse. This is an address to God as Job argues his cause before him, and the request is, that he would remove every obstacle to his presenting his cause in the most favourable manner, and so that he may be on equal terms with him. See Notes, ch. ix. 34, 35. He was ready to present his cause, and to plead before God, as (ver. 18) he had the utmost confidence that he would be able so to present it as to vindicate himself; and he asks of God that he would withdraw his hand for a time (ver. 21), and not terrify him (ver. 21), so that he could present his case with the full vigour of his mind and body, and so that he need not be overawed by the sense of the majesty and glory of the Most High. He wished to be free to present his cause without the impediments arising from a deeply distressing and painful malady. He wished to have his full intellectual and bodily vigor restored for a time to him, and then he was confident that he could successfully defend himself. He felt that he was now enfeebled by disease, and incapacitated from making the effort for self-vindication, and for maintaining his cause, which he would have been enabled to make in his palmy days. ¶ *Then will I not hide myself from thee.*

21 Withdraw ° thine hand far from me: and let not thy dread make me afraid.

22 Then call <sup>p</sup> thou, and I will answer: or let me speak, and

o Ps. 39. 10. p c. 38. 3.

From God. I will stand forth boldly and maintain my cause. I will not attempt to conceal myself, or shun the trial and the argument. See ch. ix. 34, 35.

21. *Withdraw thine hand far from me.* Notes, ch. ix. 34. The *hand* of God here is used to denote the calamity or affliction which Job was suffering. The meaning is, "Remove my affliction; restore me to health, and I will then enter on the argument in vindication of my cause. I am now oppressed, and broken down, and enfeebled by disease, and I cannot present it with the vigor which I might evince if I were in health." ¶ *And let not thy dread make me afraid.* "Do not so overpower me by thy severe majesty, that I cannot present my cause in a calm and composed manner." See Notes, ch. ix. 34. Job felt that God had power to overawe him, and he asked, therefore, that he might have a calm and composed mind, and then he would be able to do justice to his own cause.

22. *Then call thou, and I will answer.* Call me to trial; summon me to make my defence. This is language taken from courts of justice, and the idea is, that if God would remove his calamity, and not overawe him, and would then call on him to make a defence, he would be ready to respond to his call. The language means, "be thou *plaintiff* in the case, and I will enter on my defence." He speaks now to God not as to a *judge*, but as a *party*, and is disposed to go to trial. See Notes on ch. ix. 33—35. ¶ *Or let me speak, and answer thou me.* "Let me be the plaintiff, and commence the cause. In any way, let the cause come to an issue. Let me open the cause, adduce my arguments, and defend my view of the subject, and then do thou respond." The idea is, that Job desired a fair trial. He

answer thou me.

23 How many *are* mine iniquities and sins? make me to know <sup>a</sup> my transgression and my sin.

q c. 34. 32. Jno. 16. 8, 9.

was willing that God should select his position, and should either open the cause, or respond to it when he had himself opened it. To our view, there is something that is quite irreverent in this language, and I know not that it can be entirely vindicated. But perhaps, when the idea of a *trial* was once suggested, all the rest may be regarded as the mere *filling up*, or as language fitted to carry out that single idea, and to preserve the concinnity of the poem. Still, to address God in this manner is a wide licence even for poetry. There is the language of complaint here; there is an evident feeling that God was not right; there is an undue reliance of Job on his own powers; there is a disposition to blame God which we can by no means approve, and which we are not required to approve. But let us not too harshly blame the patriarch. Let him who has suffered much and long, who feels that he is forsaken by God and by man, who has lost property and friends, and who is suffering under a painful bodily malady, if he has never had any of those feelings, cast the first stone. Let not those blame him who live in affluence and prosperity, and who have yet to endure the first severe trial of life. *One* of the objects, I suppose, of this poem is, to show *human nature* as it is; to show how good men often feel under severe trial; and it would not be true to nature if the representation had been that Job was always calm, and that he never cherished an improper feeling, or gave vent to an improper thought.

23. *How many are mine iniquities and sins?* Job takes the place of the plaintiff or accuser. He opens the cause. He appeals to God to state the catalogue of his crimes, or to bring forward his charges of guilt against him. The meaning, according to Schultens, is,

24 Wherefore hidest <sup>t</sup> thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy? <sup>s</sup>

25 Wilt thou break <sup>t</sup> a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou

<sup>r</sup> Ps. 102. 2.

<sup>s</sup> La. 2. 5.

<sup>t</sup> Is. 42. 3.

"That catalogue ought to be great which has called down so many and so great calamities upon my head from heaven, when I am conscious to myself of being guilty of no offence." God sorely afflicted him. Job appeals to him to show *why* it was done, and to make a statement of the number and the magnitude of his offences. ¶ *Make me to know.* I would know on what account, and why I am thus held to be guilty, and why I am thus punished.

24. *Wherefore hidest thou thy face.* To hide the face, or to turn it away, is expressive of disapprobation. We turn away the face when we are offended with any one. See Notes on Isa. i. 15. ¶ *And holdest me for thine enemy?* Re-gardest and treatest me as an enemy.

25. *Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro?* Job here means to say that the treatment of God in regard to him was like treading down a leaf that was driven about by the wind—an insignificant, unsettled, and worthless thing. "Wouldst thou show thy power against such an object?"—The sense is, that it was not worthy of God thus to pursue one so unimportant, and so incapable of offering any resistance. ¶ *And wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?* Is it worthy of God thus to contend with the driven straw and stubble of the field? To such a leaf, and to such stubble, he compares himself; and he asks whether God could be employed in a work such as that would be, of pursuing such a flying leaf or driven stubble with a desire to overtake it, and wreak his vengeance on it.

26. *For thou writest bitter things against me.* Charges or accusations of severity. We use the word *bitter* now in a somewhat similar sense. We speak of bitter sorrow, bitter cold, &c. The language here is all taken from courts of justice, and Job is carrying out the train of

pursue the dry stubble?

26 For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.<sup>u</sup>

<sup>u</sup> Ps. 25. 7.

thought on which he had entered in regard to a trial before God. He says that the accusations which God had brought against him were of a bitter and severe character; charging him with aggravated offences, and recalling the sins of his youth, and holding him responsible for them. Rosenmüller remarks that the word *write* here is a judicial term, referring to the custom of writing the sentence of a person condemned, (as in Ps. cxlix. 9; Jer. xxii. 30); that is, decreeing the punishment. So the Greeks used the expression, γράφειν δίκην, meaning, to declare a judicial sentence. So the Arabs use the

word كتاب, *writing*, to denote a judicial sentence. ¶ *And makest me to possess.* Heb. Causest me to inherit. יָרַשְׁתִּי. He was *heir* to them; or they were now his as a possession or an inheritance. The Vulgate renders it, *consumere me vis*, &c., "thou wishest to consume me with the sins of my youth." The LXX, "and thou dost charge against me,"—περιέθηκες. ¶ *The iniquities of my youth.* The offences which I committed when young. He complains now that God recalled all those offences; that he went into days that were past, and raked up what Job had forgotten; that, not satisfied with charging on him what he had done as a man, he went back and collected all that could be found in the days when he was under the influence of youthful passions, and when, like other young men, he might have gone astray. But why should he not do it? What impropriety could there be in God in thus recalling the memory of long-forgotten sins, and causing the results to meet him now that he was a man? We may remark here, (1.) That this is often done. The sins and follies of youth seem often to be passed over or to be unnoticed by

27 Thou putttest my feet also in the stocks,<sup>x</sup> and <sup>1</sup> lookest narrowly unto all my paths; thou

<sup>a</sup> c. 33. 11.

<sup>1</sup> observest.

God. Long intervals of time, or long tracts of land or ocean may intervene between the time when sin was committed in youth, and when it shall be punished in age. The man may himself have forgotten it, and after a youth of dissipation and folly, he may perhaps have a life of prosperity for many years. But those sins are not forgotten by God. Far on in life the results of early dissipation, licentiousness, folly, will meet the offender, and overwhelm him in disgrace or calamity. (2.) God has power to recall all the offences of early life. He has access to the soul. He knows all its secret springs. With infinite ease he can reach the memory of a long-forgotten deed of guilt; and he can overwhelm the mind with the recollection of crimes that have not been thought of for years. He can fix the attention with painful intensity on some slight deed of past criminality; or he can recall forgotten sins in groups; or he can make the remembrance of one sin suggest a host of others. No man who has passed a guilty youth can be certain that his mind will not be overwhelmed with painful recollections, and however calm and secure he may now be, he may in a moment be harassed with the consciousness of deep criminality, and with most gloomy apprehensions of the wrath to come. (3.) A young man should be pure. He has otherwise no security of respectability in future life, or of pleasant recollections of the past, should he reach old age. He who spends his early days in dissipation must expect to reap the fruits of it in future years. Those sins will meet him in his way, and most probably at an unexpected moment, and in an unexpected place. If he ever becomes a good man, he will have many an hour of bitter and painful regret at the follies of his early life; if he does not, he will meet the accumulated results of his sin on the bed of death and in hell. Somewhere, and somehow, every instance of folly is to be remembered

settest a print upon the <sup>2</sup> heels of my feet.

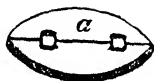
<sup>2</sup> roots.

hereafter, and will be remembered with sighs and tears. (4.) God rules among men. There is a moral government on the earth. Of this there is no more certain proof than in this fact. The power of summoning up past sins to the recollection; of recalling those that have been forgotten by the offender himself, and of placing them in black array before the guilty man; and of causing them to seize with a giant's grasp upon the soul, is a power such as God alone can wield, and shows at once that there is a God, and that he rules in the hearts of men. And, (5.) If God holds this power now, he will hold it in the world to come. The forgotten sins of youth, and the sins of age, will be remembered then. The sinner walks over a volcano. It may be now calm and still. Its base may be crowned with verdure, its sides with orchards and vineyards; and far up its heights the tall tree may wave, and on its summit the snow may lie undisturbed. But at any moment that mountain may heave, and the burning torrent spread desolation everywhere. So with the sinner. He knows not how soon the day of vengeance may come; how soon he may be made to inherit the sins of his youth.

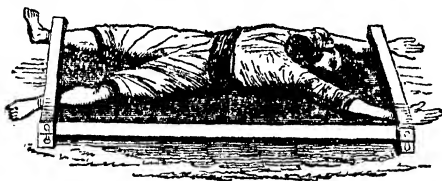
27. *Thou putttest my feet also in the stocks.* The word rendered *stocks*, (𐤒𐤕), denotes the wooden frame or block in which the feet of a person were confined for punishment. The whole passage here is designed to describe the feet as so confined in a clog or clogs, as to preclude the power of motion. Stocks or clogs were used often in ancient times as a mode of punishment. Prov. vii. 22. Jeremiah was punished by being confined in the stocks. Jer. xx. 2; xxix. 6. Paul and Silas were in like manner confined in the prison in stocks. Acts xvi. 24. Stocks appear to have been of two kinds. They were either *clogs* attached to one foot or to both feet, so as to embarrass, but not entirely to prevent walking, or they were fixed

frames to which the feet were attached so as entirely to preclude motion. The former were often used with runaway slaves to prevent their escaping again when taken, or were affixed to prisoners to prevent their escape. The fixed kinds—which are probably referred to here—were of different sorts. They consisted of a frame, with holes for the feet only; or for the feet and the hands; or for the feet, the hands, and the neck. At Pompeii, stocks have been found so contrived, that ten prisoners might be chained by the leg, each leg separately, by the sliding of a bar. *Pict. Bible*. The form of this instrument, as seen in

the East at this day, is given in the following cuts:



The upper half (a) being removed, each leg is placed, just above the ankle, in the groove of the lower half, and then the upper part is fastened down so as to confine them inextricably. The instrument for confining the hands is formed on the same principle, and is represented in the cut below. The instrument is still used in India, and is such



as to confine the limbs in a very distressing position, though the head is allowed to move freely. ¶ *And lookest narrowly unto all my paths*. This idea occurs also in ch. xxxiii. 11, though expressed somewhat differently, "He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths." Probably the allusion is to the paths by which he might escape. God watched, or observed every way—as a sentinel or guard would a prisoner who was hampered or clogged, and who would make an attempt to escape. ¶ *Thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet*. Marg. roots. Such also is the Hebrew, רִיבְּרִיבְּ. Vulg. *vestigia*. Sept.

Upon the roots—*εἰς δὲ ῥιζας*—of my feet thou comest." The word רִיבְּ, means, properly, root; then the bottom, or the lower part of a thing; and hence the soles of the feet. The word rendered, "settest a print," from רִיבְּ, means, to cut in, to hew, to hack; then to engrave, carve, delineate, portray; then to dig. Various interpretations have been given of the passage here. Gesenius supposes it to mean, "Around the roots of my feet thou hast digged," that is, hast made a trench so that I can

get no farther. But, though this suits the connexion, yet it is an improbable interpretation. It is not the way in which one would endeavor to secure a prisoner, to make a ditch over which he could not leap. Others render it, "Around the soles of my feet thou hast drawn lines," i. e., thou hast made marks how far I may go. Dr. Good supposes that the whole description refers to some method of clogging a wild animal for the purpose of taming him, and that the expression here refers to a mark on the hoof of the animal, by which the owner could designate him. Noyes accords with Gesenius. The editor of the Pictorial Bible supposes that it may refer to the manner in which the stocks were made, and that it means that a seal was affixed to the parts of the plank of which they were constructed, when they were joined together. He adds, that the Chinese have a portable pillory of this kind, and that offenders are obliged to wear it around their necks for a given period, and that over the place where it is joined together a piece of paper is pasted, that it may not be opened without detection. Rosenmüller supposes that it means, that Job was



28 And he, as a rotten thing,

consumeth, as a garment that is moth eaten.

confined within certain prescribed limits, beyond which he was not allowed to go. This restraint he supposes was effected by binding his feet by a cord to the stocks, so that he was not allowed to go beyond a certain distance. The *general* sense is clear, that Job was confined within certain limits, and was observed with very marked vigilance. But I doubt whether either of the explanations suggested is the true one. Probably some custom is alluded to of which we have no knowledge now—some mark that was affixed to the feet to prevent a prisoner from escaping without being detected. What that was, I think, we do not know. Perhaps Oriental researches will yet disclose some custom that will explain it.

28. *And he, as a rotten thing, consumeth.* Noyes renders this, "And I, like an abandoned thing, shall waste away." Dr. Good translates it, "Well may he dissolve as corruption." Rosenmüller supposes that Job refers to himself by the word *אני*, *he*, and that having spoken of himself in the previous verses, he now changes the mode of speech, and speaks in the third person. In illustration of this, he refers to a passage in Euripides, *Alcestis*, vs. 690. The Vulgate renders it in the first person, *Qui quasi putredo consumendus sum*. The design seems to be, to represent himself as an object not worthy such constant surveillance on the part of God. God set his mark upon him; watched him with a close vigilance and a steady eye—and

yet he was watching one who was turning fast to corruption, and who would soon be gone. He regarded it as unworthy of God to be so attentive in watching over so worthless an object. This is closely connected with the following chapter, and there should have been no interruption here. The allusion to himself, as feeble and decaying, leads him into the beautiful description in the following chapter, of the state of man in general. The connexion is something like this:—"I am afflicted and tried in various ways. My feet are in the stocks; my way is hedged up. I am weak, frail, and dying. But so it is with man universally. My condition is like that of the man at large, for

"Man, the offspring of a woman,  
Is short-lived, and is full of trouble."

¶ *As a rotten thing*, *רָקָב*. The word, *רָקָב*, means, rottenness, or, caries of bones. Prov. xii. 4; xiv. 30; Hos. v. 12. Here it means, anything that is going to decay, and the comparison is that of man to anything that is thus constantly decaying, and that will soon be wholly gone. ¶ *Consumeth*. Or rather, *decays*, *יָבֵשׁ*. The word, *יָבֵשׁ*, is applied to that which falls away or decays, which is worn out and waxes old—as a garment. Deut. viii. 4; Isa. l. 9; li. 6. ¶ *As a garment that is moth eaten*. "As a garment the moth consumes it." Heb. On the word *moth*, and the sentiment here expressed, see Notes on ch. iv. 19.

## CHAPTER XIV.

**M**AN that is born of a woman is <sup>1</sup> of few days, and full <sup>2</sup> of trouble.

<sup>1</sup> short of.

a Ec. 2. 23.

1. *Man that is born of a woman.* See Notes on ch. xiii. 28. The object of Job in these verses, is to show the frailty and feebleness of man. He

therefore dwells on many circumstances adapted to this, and this is one of the most stirring and beautiful. He alludes to the delicacy and feebleness of the

2 He <sup>b</sup> cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 90. 5—10.

female sex, and says that the offspring of one so frail must himself be frail; the child of one so feeble must himself be feeble. Possibly, also, there may be an allusion here to the prevailing opinion in the Oriental world, of the inferiority of the female sex. The following forcible lines by Lord Bacon, express a similar sentiment:

"The world's a bubble, and the life of man  
Less than a span,  
In his conception wretched, from the womb  
So to the tomb.  
Curst from the cradle, and brought up to years  
With cares and fears.  
Who then to frail mortality shall trust,  
But limns the water, or but writes in dust."

¶ *Of few days.* Heb. "Brief of days." Comp. Ps. xc. 10; Gen. xlvii. 9. ¶ *And full of trouble.* Comp. Notes on ch. iii. 17. Who cannot bear witness to this? How expressive a description is it of life! And even, too, where life seems most happy; where the sun of prosperity seems to shine on our way, and where blessings, like drops of dew, seem to descend on us, how true is it still that life is full of trouble, and that the way of man is a weary way! Despite all that he can do—all his care, and skill, and learning, and wealth, life is a weary pilgrimage, and is burdened with many woes. "Few and evil have the days of the years of my pilgrimage been," said the patriarch Jacob, and they who have advanced near the same number of years with him can utter with deep emotion the same beautiful language. Goethe, the celebrated German, said of himself in advanced age, "They have called me a child of fortune, nor have I any wish to complain of the course of my life. Yet it has been nothing but labour and sorrow, and I may truly say, that in seventy-five years I have not had four weeks of true comfort. It was the constant rolling of a stone that was always to be lifted anew. When I look back upon my earlier and middle life, and consider how few are left of those that were young with me, I am reminded of a summer visit to a watering-place. On

fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.

arriving, one makes the acquaintance of those who have been already some time there, and leave the week following. This loss is painful. Now one becomes attached to the second generation, with which one lives for a time and becomes intimately connected. But this also passes away and leaves us solitary with the third, which arrives shortly before our own departure, and with which we have no desire to have much intercourse."—Rauch's Psychology, p. 343.

2. *He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down.* Nothing can be more obvious and more beautiful than this, and the image has been employed by writers in all ages, but nowhere with more beauty, or with more frequency, than in the Bible. See Isa. xl. 6; Ps. xxxvii. 2; xc. 6; ciii. 15. Next to the Bible, it is probable that Shakspeare has employed the image with the most exquisite beauty of any poet:

"This is the state of man: to-day he puts forth  
The tender leaves of hope, to-morrow blossoms,  
And bears his blushing honors thick upon him;  
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost,  
And—when he thinks, good easy man, full  
surely  
His greatness is a ripening—nips his root,  
And then he falls."—Henry viii. Act. iii. Sc. 2.

¶ *He fleeth also as a shadow.* Another exquisite figure, and as true as it is beautiful. So the Psalmist,

My days are like a shadow that declineth.  
Ps. cii. 11.  
Man is like to vanity;  
His days are as a shadow that passeth away.  
Ps. cxliv. 4.

The idea of Job is, that there is no substance, nothing that is permanent. A shadow moves on gently and silently, and is soon gone. It leaves no trace of its being, and returns no more. They who have watched the beautiful shadow of a cloud on a landscape, and have seen how rapidly it passes over meadows and fields of grain, and rolls up the mountain side and disappears, will have a vivid conception of this figure. How gently, yet how rapidly it moves. How soon it is gone. How void of impres-

3 And <sup>c</sup> dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest <sup>d</sup> me into judgment with thee?

4 Who <sup>1</sup> can bring a clean <sup>e</sup>

<sup>c</sup> Ps. 144. 3. <sup>d</sup> Ps. 142. 2.

<sup>1</sup> will give. <sup>e</sup> Ps. 51. 2, 10. Jno. 3. 6.

sion is its course. Who can track its way; who can reach it? So man moves on. Soon he is gone; he leaves no trace of his being, and returns no more.

3. *And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one.* Is one so weak, so frail, so short-lived, worthy the constant vigilance of the infinite God? In Zech. xii. 4, the expression, "to open the eyes" upon one, means to look angrily upon him. Here, it means to observe or watch closely. ¶ *And bringest me into judgment with thee?* Is it equal or proper that one so frail and feeble should be called to a trial with one so mighty as the infinite God? Does God seek a trial with one so much his inferior, and so unable to stand before him? This is language taken from courts of justice, and the meaning is, that the parties were wholly unequal, and that it was unworthy of God to maintain a controversy in this manner with feeble man. This is a favorite idea with Job, that there was no equality between him and God, and that the whole controversy was, therefore, conducted on his part with great disadvantage. Notes, ch. ix. 34, 35.

4. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* This is evidently a proverb or an adage; but its connexion here is not very apparent. Probably, however, it is designed as a plea of mitigation for his conscious frailties and infirmities. He could not but admit that he had faults. But, he asks, how could it be expected to be otherwise? He belonged to a race that was sinful and depraved. Connected with such a race, how could it be otherwise than that he should be prone to evil? Why, then, did God follow him with so much severity, and hold him with a grasp so close and so unrelenting? Why did he treat him as if he ought to be expected to be perfectly pure, or as if it were

*thing out of an unclean?* not one.

5 Seeing his days *are* determined, the number of his months *are* with thee, thou hast appointed <sup>f</sup> his bounds that he cannot pass;

<sup>f</sup> ver. 14. He. 9. 27.

reasonable to suppose he would be otherwise than unholy? This passage is of great value, as showing the early opinion of the world in regard to the native character of man. The sentiment was undoubtedly common—so common as to have passed into a proverb—that man was a sinner; and that it could not be expected that any one of the race should be pure and holy. The sentiment is as true as it is obvious—like will beget like all over the world. The nature of the lion, the tiger, the hyena, the serpent is propagated, and so the same thing is true of man. It is a great law, that the offspring will resemble the parentage; and, as the offspring of the lion is not a lamb, but a young lion; of a wolf, is not a kid, but a young wolf, so the offspring of man is not an angel, but is a man with the same nature, the same moral character, the same proneness to evil with the parent. The Chaldee renders this: "Who will give one pure from a man polluted in sin, except God, who is one, and who forgiveth him?" But this is manifestly a departure from the sense of the passage. Jerome, however, has adopted nearly the same translation. As an historical record, this passage proves that the doctrine of original sin was early held in the world. Still it is true that the same great law prevails, that the offspring of woman is a sinner—no matter where he may be born, or in what circumstances he may be placed. No art, no philosophy, no system of religion can prevent the operation of this great law under which we live, and by which we die. Comp. Notes on Rom. v. 19.

5. *Seeing his days are determined.* Since man is so frail, and so short-lived, let him alone, that he may pass his little time with some degree of comfort, and then die. See Notes on ch. vii. 19 —21. The word *determined*, here means

6 Turn from him, that he may  
 1 rest, till he shall accomplish, as  
 an hireling, his day.

<sup>1</sup> *cease.*

*fixed, settled.* God has fixed the number of his days, so that they cannot be exceeded. Comp. Notes on Isa. x. 22, and Ps. xc. 10. ¶ *The number of his months are with thee.* Thou hast the ordering of them, or they are determined by thee. ¶ *Thou hast appointed his bounds.* Thou hast fixed a limit, or hast determined the time which he is to live, and he cannot go beyond it. There is no elixir of life that can prolong our days beyond that period. Soon we shall come to that outer limit of life, and then we MUST DIE. When that is we know not, and it is not desirable to know. It is better that it should be concealed. If we knew that it was near, it would fill us with gloom, and deter us from the efforts and the plans of life altogether. If it were remote, we should be careless and secure, and should think there was time enough yet to prepare to die. As it is, we know that the period is not very far distant; we know not but that it may be very near at hand, and we would be always ready.

6. *Turn from him*—פָּרַח. Look away from, or turn away the eyes. Isa. xxii. 4. Job had represented the Lord as looking intently upon him, and narrowly watching all his ways. He now asks him that he would look away and suffer him to be alone, and to spend the little time he had in comfort and peace. ¶ *That he may rest.* Marg. *Cease.* “Let him be ceased from”—פָּרַח. The idea is not that of *rest*, but it is that of having God *cease* to afflict him; or, in other words, leaving him to himself. Job wished the hand of God to be withdrawn, and prayed that he might be left to himself. ¶ *Till he shall accomplish*—אָמַד. Sept. εὐδοκίαν τὸν βίον —“and comfort his life,” or make his life pleasant. Jerome renders it, “until his desired day—*optata dies*—shall come like that of an hireling.” Dr. Good, “that he may fill up his day.” Noyes, “that he may enjoy his day.”

7 For there is hope of a tree,  
 if it be cut down, that it will  
 sprout again, and that the tender  
 branch thereof will not cease.

The word here used (נָחַם) means, properly, to delight in, to take pleasure in, to satisfy, to pay off; and there can be no doubt that there was couched under the use of this word the notion of *enjoyment*, or *pleasure*. Job wished to be spared, that he might have comfort yet in this world. The comparison of himself with a *hireling*, is not that he might have comfort *like* a hireling—for such an image would not be pertinent or appropriate—but that his life was like that of an hireling, and he wished to be let alone until the time was completed. On this sentiment, see Notes on ch. vii. 1.

7. *For there is hope of a tree.* This passage to ver. 12, is one of exquisite beauty. Its object is to state reasons why man should be permitted to enjoy this life. A tree, if cut down, might spring up again and flourish, but not man. He died to rise no more; he is cut down, and lives not again. The passage is important as expressing the prevalent sentiment of the time in which Job lived about the future condition of man, and is one that deserves a close examination. The great question is, whether Job believed in the future state, or in the resurrection of the dead? On this question one or two things are clear at the outset. (1.) He did not believe that man would spring up from the grave in any sense similar to the mode in which the sprout or germ of a tree grows up when the tree is cut down. (2.) He did not believe in the doctrine of metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, a doctrine that was so common among the ancients. In this respect the patriarchal religion stood aloof from the systems of heathenism, and there is not to be found, that I know of, any expression that would lead us to suppose that they had ever embraced it, or had even heard of it. The general sentiment here is, that if a tree is cut down, it may be expected to shoot up again, and another tree will be found in its

place—as is the case with the chesnut, the willow, the oak. But Job says that there was nothing like this to happen to man. There was no root, no germ, no seminal principle from which he would be made to live again on the earth. He was to be finally cut off from all his pleasures and his friends here, and to go away to return no more. Still, that Job believed in his continued existence beyond the grave—his existence in the dark and gloomy world of shades, is apparent from the whole book, and, indeed, from the very passage before us. See ver. 13—comp. ch. x. 21, 22. The image here is one that is very beautiful, and one that is often employed by poets. Thus Moschus, in his third *Idyl*, as translated by Gisborne:

"The meanest herb we trample in the field,  
Or in the garden nurture, when its leaf  
At winter's touch is blasted, and its place  
Forgotten, soon its vernal bud renews,  
And from short slumber wakes to life again.  
Man wakes no more! Man, valiant, glorious,  
wise,  
When death once chills him, sinks in sleep  
profound,  
A long, unconscious, never-ending sleep."

See also Beattie's *Hermit*:

"'Tis night, and the landscape is lovely no  
more;  
I mourn, but, ye woodlands, I mourn not for  
you;  
For morn is approaching, your charms to re-  
store,  
Perfumed with fresh fragrance, and glittering  
with dew.  
Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn;  
Kind nature the embryo blossom will save;  
But when shall spring visit the mouldering  
urn?"

O when shall it dawn on the night of the grave?"

The same image also has been beautifully employed by Dr. Dwight, though urged by him as an argument to prove the doctrine of the resurrection:

"In those lone, silent realms of night,  
Shall peace and hope no more arise?  
No future morning light the tomb,  
Nor day-star gild the darksome skies?  
Shall spring the faded world revive?  
Shall waning moons their light renew?  
Again shall setting suns ascend,  
And chase the darkness from our view?"

The feeling of Job here is, that when man was removed from the earth, he was removed finally; that there was

no hope of his revisiting it again, and that he could not be employed in the dark abode of departed spirits in the cheerful and happy manner in which he might be in this world of light. This idea is expressed, also, in a most tender manner by the Psalmist:

Wilt thou show wonders to the dead?  
Shall the dead arise and praise thee?  
Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the  
grave?  
Or thy faithfulness in destruction?  
Shall thy wonders be known in the dark?  
And thy righteousness in the land of forget-  
fulness? Ps. lxxxviii. 9-11.

And the same feelings were evinced by Hezekiah, the pious king of Israel:

For Sheol cannot praise thee?  
Death cannot celebrate thee;  
They that go down into the pit cannot hope  
for thy truth.  
The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as  
I do this day;  
The father to the children shall make known  
thy faithfulness.

Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19.

All these gloomy and desponding views arose from the imperfect conception which they had of the future world. It was to them a world of dense and gloomy shades—a world of night—of conscious existence indeed—but still far away from light, and from the comforts which men enjoyed on the earth. We are to remember that the revelations then made were very few and obscure; and we should deem it a matter of inestimable favour that we have a better hope, and have far more just and clear views of the employments of the future world. Yet probably our views of that world, with all the light which we have, are much farther from the reality than the views of the patriarchs were from those which we are permitted to cherish. Such as they are, however, they are fitted to elevate and cheer the soul. We shall not, indeed, live again on the earth, but we shall enter a world of light and glory, compared with which all that is glorious here shall fade away. Not far distant is that blessed world; and in our trials we may look to it not with dread, as Job did to the land of shades, but with triumph and joy. ¶ *Will not cease.* Will not fail, or be wanting. It will spring up and live.

8 Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground;

9 Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.

8. *Though the root thereof wax old.* Though life becomes almost extinct. The idea is, though the root of the tree be *very old*, yet it does not become wholly lifeless. It is not like an old man, when life goes out altogether. In the very aged root there will be vitality still; but not so in man. ¶ *And the stock thereof.* The *stump*—literally that which is cut off, קָצָר. The meaning is, that when the trunk of the tree is cut down and dies altogether, life remains in the root; but when man falls, life is wholly extinct.

9. *Yet through the scent of water.* The word here rendered *scent* (רִיחַ) means, properly, the odor or fragrance which anything exhales or emits. Cant. ii. 13, vii. 14; Gen. xxvii. 27. The idea is very delicate and poetic. It is designed to denote a gentle and pleasant contact—not a *rush* of water—by which the tree is made to live. It *inhales*, so to speak, the vital influence from the water—as we are refreshed and revived by grateful odors when we are ready to faint. ¶ *It will bud.* Or, rather, it will *germinate*, or spring up again, יִצְקֶה. See Notes on Isa. lv. 10. ¶ *And bring forth boughs*, יִפְרֹץ. This word usually means a harvest. Gen. viii. 22, xxx. 14, xlv. 6. It also means, as here, a bough, or branch. Comp. Ps. lxxx. 12; Job xviii. 16, xxix. 19. ¶ *Like a plant.* Like a young plant—as fresh and vigorous as a plant that is set out.

10. *But man dieth, and wasteth away.* Marg. *Is weakened or cut off.* The Hebrew word (שָׁחַת) means to overthrow, prostrate, discomfit; and hence to be weak, frail, or waste away. The LXX render it, Ἄνθρωπος δὲ τελευτήσας ὥχεται—*man dying goes away*. Herder renders it, “his power is gone.” The idea is, he

10 But man dieth, and <sup>1</sup> wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?

11 As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up:

*is weakened, or, cut off.*

entirely vanishes. He leaves nothing to sprout up again. There is no germ; no shoot; no living root; no seminal principle. Of course, this refers wholly to his living again on the earth, and not to the question about his future existence. That is a different inquiry. The main idea with Job here is, that when man dies, there is no germinating principle, as there is in a tree that is cut down. Of the truth of this there can be no doubt; and this comparison of man with the vegetable world must have early occurred to mankind, and hence led to the inquiry whether he would not live in a future state. Other things that are cut down spring up again and live. But man is cut down, and does not spring up again. Will he not be likely, therefore, to have an existence in some future state, and to spring up and flourish there? “The Romans,” says Rosenmüller, “made those trees to be the symbol of death, which being cut down, do not live again, or from whose roots no germs arise, as the pine and cypress, which were planted in burial-places, or were accustomed to be placed at the doors of the houses of the dead.” ¶ *Man giveth up the ghost.* Expires, or dies. This is all that the word (נָתַן) means. The notion of giving up the spirit or the ghost—an idea not improper in itself—is not found in the Hebrew word, nor is it in the corresponding Greek word in the New Testament. Comp. Acts v. 10.

11. *As the waters fail from the sea.* As the waters evaporate wholly, and leave the bottom wholly dry, so it is with man, who passes entirely away, and leaves nothing. But to what *fact* Job refers here is not known. The sea or ocean has never been dried up so as to furnish a ground for this comparison.

12 So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens <sup>s</sup> be

g Ps. 102. 26. Is. 51. 6. 2 Pe. 3. 10, 11. Re. 20. 11.

Noyes renders it, "the lake." Dr. Good, without the slightest authority, renders it, "as the billows pass away with the tides." Herder supposes it to mean that till the waters fail from the sea man will not rise again, but the Hebrew will not bear this interpretation. Probably the true interpretation is that which makes the word rendered *sea* (יָם) refer to a lake, or a stagnant pool. See notes on Isa. xi. 15, xix. 5. The word is applied not unfrequently to a lake, as to the lake of Genesareth, Num. xxxiv. 11; to the Dead Sea, Gen. xiv. 3; Deut. iv. 49; Zech. xiv. 8. It is used, also, to denote the Nile, Isa. xix. 5; and the Euphrates, Isa. xxvii. 1. It is also employed to denote the brazen sea that was made by Solomon, and placed in front of the temple. 2 Kings xxv. 13. I see no reason to doubt, therefore, that it may be used here to denote the collections of water which were made by torrents pouring down from the mountains, and which would after a little while wholly evaporate. ¶ *And the flood decayeth.* The river—נָחַל. Such an occurrence would be common in the parched countries of the East. See Notes on ch. vi. 15, seq. As such torrents vanish wholly away, so it was with man. Every vestige disappeared. Comp. 2 Sam. xiv. 14.

12. *So man lieth down, and riseth not.* He lieth down in the grave and does not rise again on the earth. ¶ *Till the heavens be no more.* That is, never; for such is the fair interpretation of the passage, and this accords with its design. Job means to say, undoubtedly, that man would never appear again in the land of the living; that he would not spring up from the grave, as a sprout does from a fallen tree; and that when he dies, he goes away from the earth never to return. Whether he believed in a future state, or in the future resurrection, is another question, and one that cannot be determined from this passage. His complaint is, that the pre-

no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

13 O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou would-

sent life is short, and that man, when he has once passed through it, cannot return to enjoy it again, if it has been unhappy; and he asks, therefore, why, since it was so short, man might not be permitted to enjoy it without molestation. It does not follow from this passage that he believed that the heavens ever would be no more, or would pass away. The heavens are the most permanent and enduring objects of which we have any knowledge, and are therefore used to denote permanency and eternity. See Psalm lxxxix. 36, 37. This verse, therefore, is simply a solemn declaration of the belief of Job that when man dies, he dies to live no more on the earth. Of the truth of this, no one can doubt—and the truth is as important and affecting as it is undoubted. If man could come back again, life would be a different thing. If he could revisit the earth to repair the evils of a wicked life, to repent of his errors, to make amends for his faults, and to make preparation for a future world, it would be a different thing to live, and a different thing to die. But when he travels over the road of life, he treads a path which is not to be traversed again. When he neglects an opportunity to do good, it cannot be recalled. When he commits an offence, he cannot come back to repair the evil. He falls, and dies, and lives no more. He enters on other scenes, and is amidst the retributions of another state. How important then to secure the passing moment, and to be prepared to go hence, to return no more! The idea here presented is one that is common with the poets. Thus Horace says:

"Nobis, cum semel occidit brevis lux,  
Nox est perpetua una dormienda."

13. *O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave.* Comp. Notes on ch. iii. 1, seq. Heb., in Sheol, שְׁאוֹל. Vulg. in inferno. Sept. ἐν ᾗδῃ—in Hades. On the meaning of the word *Sheol*, see Notes on Isaiah v. 14. It does not mean here, I

est keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!

think, the grave. It means the region of departed spirits, the place of the dead, where he wished to be, until the tempest of the wrath of God should pass by. He wished to be shut up in some place where the fury of that tempest would not meet him, and where he would be safe. On the meaning of this passage, however, there has been considerable variety of opinion among expositors. Many suppose that the word here properly means *the grave*, and that Job was willing to wait there until the wrath of God should be spent, and then that he desired to be brought forth in the general resurrection of the dead. So the Chaldee interprets it of the grave—

אֶתְחַבֵּא. There is evidently a desire on the part of Job to be hid in some secret place until the tempest of wrath should sweep by, and until he should be safe. There is an expectation that he would live again at some future period, and a desire to live after the present tokens of the wrath of God should pass by. It is probably a wish for a safe retreat or a hiding-place—where he might be secure, as from a storm. A somewhat similar expression occurs in Isa. ii. 19, where it is said that men would go into holes and caverns until the storm of wrath should pass by, or in order to escape it. But whether Job meant the grave, or the place of departed spirits, cannot be determined, and is not material. In the view of the ancients the one was not remote from the other. The entrance to Sheol was the grave; and either of them would furnish the protection sought. It should be added that the grave was with the ancients usually a cave, or an excavation from the rock, and such a place might suggest the idea of a hiding-place from the raging storm. ¶ *That thou wouldest appoint me a set time.* When I should be delivered or rescued. Herder renders this, "Appoint me then a new

14 If a man die, shall <sup>h</sup> he live *again*? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change <sup>i</sup> come.

<sup>h</sup> 1 Th. 4. 14—16. <sup>i</sup> 1 Co. 15. 51—54.

term." The word rendered "a set time," *pr*, means, properly, something decreed, prescribed, appointed; and here an appointed time when God would remember or revisit him. It is the expression of his lingering love of life. He had wished to die. He was borne down by heavy trials, and desired a release. He longed even for the grave. Comp. ch. iii. 20—22. But there is the instinctive love of life in his bosom, and he asks that God would appoint a time, though ever so remote, in which he would return to him, and permit him to live again. There is the secret hope of some future life—though remote; and he is willing to be hid for any period of time until the wrath of God should pass by, if he might live again. Such is the lingering desire of life in the bosom of man in the severest trials, and the darkest hours; and so instinctively does man look on even to the most remote period with the hope of life. Nature speaks out in the desires of Job; and one of the objects of the poem is to describe the workings of nature with reference to a future state in the severe trials to which he was subjected. We cannot but remark here, what support and consolation would he have found in the clear revelation which we have of the future world, and what a debt of gratitude do we owe to that gospel which has brought life and immortality to light!

14. *If a man die, shall he live again?* This is a sudden transition in the thought. He had unconsciously worked himself up almost to the belief that man *might* live again even on the earth. He had asked to be hid somewhere—even in the grave—until the wrath of God should be overpast, and then that God would remember him, and bring him forth again to life. Here he checks himself. It cannot be, he says, that man *will* live again on the earth. The hope is visionary and vain, and I will endure what is



15 Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.

appointed for me, until some change shall come. The question here, "shall he live again?" is a strong form of expressing negation. He will *not* live again on the earth. Any hope of that kind is, therefore, vain, and I will wait until the change come—whatever that may be. ¶ *All the days of my appointed time.* מְנַחֵם, my warfare; my enlistment; my hard service. See Notes on ch. vii. 1. ¶ *Will I wait.* I will endure with patience my trials. I will not seek to cut short the time of my service. ¶ *Till my change come.* What this should be, he does not seem to know. It might be relief from sufferings, or it might be happiness in some future state. At all events, this state of things could not last always, and under his heavy pressure of wo, he concluded to sit down and quietly wait for any change. He was certain of one thing—that life was to be passed over but once—that man could not go over the journey again—that he could not return to the earth and go over his youth or his age again. Grotius, and after him Rosenmüller and Noyes, here quotes a sentiment similar to this from Euripides, in *Supplicibus*, vs. 1080, seq.

Οἱμοι' τί δὴ βροτοῖσιν οὐκ ἔστιν τόδε,  
Νέους δὲ εἶναι, καὶ γέροντας αὐ πάλιν; κ.τ.λ.

The whole passage is thus elegantly translated by Grotius:

"Proh fata! cur non est datum mortalibus  
Duplici juventutē, duplici senio frui?  
Intra penates siquid habet incommode,  
Fas seniore corrigi sententiā;  
Hoc vita non permittit; at qui bis foret  
Juvenis senexque, siquid erratum foret  
Priore, id emendaret in cursu altero."

The thought here expressed cannot but occur to every reflecting mind. There is no one who has not felt that he could correct the errors and follies of his life, if he were permitted to live it over again. But there is a good reason why it should not be so. What a world would this be if man *knew* that he might return and repair the evils of his course by living it over again! How securely in sin

16 For <sup>k</sup> now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin?

& Pr. 5. 21.

would he live! How little would he be restrained! How little concerned to be prepared for the life to come! God has, therefore, wisely and kindly put this out of the question; and there is scarcely any safeguard of virtue more firm than this fact. We may also observe that the feelings here expressed by Job are the appropriate expressions of a pious heart. Man *should* wait patiently in trial till his change comes. To the friend of God those sorrows will be brief. A change will soon come—the last change—and a change for the better. Beyond that, there shall be no change; none will be desirable or desired. For that time we should patiently wait, and all the sorrows which may intervene *before* that comes, we should patiently bear.

15. *Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee.* This is language taken from courts of justice. It refers, probably, not to a future time, but to the present. "Call thou now, and I will respond." It expresses a desire to come at once to trial; to have the matter adjusted before he should leave the world. He could not bear the idea of going out of the world under the imputations which were lying on him, and he asked for an opportunity to vindicate himself before his Maker. Comp. Notes on ch. ix. 16. ¶ *Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.* To me, one of thy creatures. This should, with more propriety, be rendered in the imperative, "do thou have a desire." It is the expression of an earnest wish that God would show an interest in him as one of his creatures, and would bring the matter to a speedy issue. The word here rendered, "have a desire" (חָפֵץ), means, literally, to be or become *pale* (from חָפֵץ, *silver*, so called from its paleness, like the Greek *ἀργυρος*, from *ἀργός*, *white*); and then the verb means to pine, or long after anything, so as to become pale.

16. *For now thou numberest my steps.* Thou dost make strict inquiry into all

17 My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.

18 And surely the mountain

my conduct, that thou mayest mark my errors, and hold me bound to punishment. The sense is, that God treated him now with severity; and he besought him to have pity on him, and bring him to trial, and give him an opportunity to vindicate himself.

17. *My transgression is sealed up.* The verb rendered *sealed up* (סָמַךְ) means, to seal, to close, to shut up. See Notes on Isa. viii. 16. Comp. Notes on Job ix. 7. It was common with the ancients to use a seal where we use a lock. Money was counted and put into a bag, and a seal was attached to it. Hence a seal might be put to a bag, as a sort of certificate of the amount, and to save the necessity of counting it again. ¶ *In a bag*—כְּבִּיטָה. So Jerome, *in sacculo*. So the LXX, ἐν βαλαντίῳ. The word כְּבִּיטָה means, usually, a *bundle* (1 Sam. xxv. 29; Cant. i. 13), or anything bound up (comp. Job xxvi. 8; Hos. xiii. 12; Ex. xii. 34; Prov. xxvi. 8; Isa. viii. 16; Gen. xlii. 35; Cant. i. 13; Prov. vii. 20); but here it is not improperly rendered, a bag. The idea is, that they were counted and numbered like money, and then sealed up and carefully put away. God had made an accurate estimate of their number, and he seemed carefully to guard and observe them—as a man does bags of gold—so that none might be lost. His sins seemed to have become a sort of valuable treasure to the Almighty, none of which he allowed now to escape his notice. ¶ *And thou sewest up mine iniquity.* Noyes renders this, “and thou addest unto mine iniquity.” Good, “thou tiest together mine iniquity.” The word here used (סָפַךְ) means, properly, to patch; to patch together; to sew; to join together as carpenters do their work; and then to devise or forge—as a falsehood; to *join* a malicious charge to a person. Thus, in Ps. cxix. 69, “The proud have *forged a lie* (סָפַךְ שָׁוְיָא) against me,” that is, they have *joined* a lie to

falling<sup>1</sup> cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.

<sup>1</sup> *Fadeth.*

me, or devised this story about me. So in Job xiii. 4, “Ye are *forgers of lies*.” The word does not occur elsewhere. The Greeks have a similar expression in the phrase ῥάπτειν ἔπη—whence the word ῥάψωδος. The word here, it seems to me, is used in the sense of *sewing up* money in a bag, as well as sealing it. This is done when there are large sums, to avoid the inconvenience of counting it. The sum is marked on the bag, and a seal affixed to it to authenticate it, and it is thus passed from one to another without the trouble of counting. If a seal is placed on the bag, it will circulate for its assigned value, without being opened for examination. It is usual now in the East for a bag to contain five hundred piastres, and hence such a sum is called “a purse,” and amounts are calculated by so many “purses.” See Harmer, ii. 285, Chardin, and Pict. Bible *in loc*. The sense here is, that God hath carefully numbered his sins, and marked them, and meant that none of them should escape. He regarded them as very great. They could now be referred to in the *gross*, without the trouble of casting up the amount again. The sins of a man's past life are summed up and marked with reference to the future judgment.

18. *And surely the mountain falling.* Marg., *Fadeth*. The sense of this is, that the hope of man in regard to living again must certainly fail—as a mountain falls and does not rise again; as the rock is removed, and is not replaced; or as the waters wear away the stones, and they disappear. The hope of dying man was not like the tree that would spring up again (vs. 7—9); it was like the falling mountains, the wasting waters (ver. 11), the rock that was removed. The reference in the phrase before us is, probably, to a mountain that settles down and disappears—as is sometimes the case in violent convulsions of nature. It does not rise again,

19 The waters wear the stones: thou<sup>1</sup> wastest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth; and thou destroyest the

<sup>1</sup> overflowest.

but is gone to re-appear no more. So Job says it was of man. ¶ *And the rock is removed.* An earthquake shakes it, and removes it from its foundation, and it is not replaced.

19. *The waters wear the stones.* By their constant attrition, they wear away even the hard rocks, and they disappear, and return no more. The sense is, that constant changes are going on in nature, and man resembles those objects which are removed to appear no more, and not the productions of the vegetable world that spring up again. It is possible that there may also be included the idea here, that the patience, constancy, firmness, and life of any man must be worn out by long continued trials, as even hard rocks would be worn away by the constant attrition of waters. ¶ *Thou wastest away.* Marg., *overflowest.* This is literally the meaning of the Hebrew

But there is included the sense of washing away by the inundation. ¶ *The things which grow out of the dust of the earth.* Herder and Noyes translate this, "the floods overflow the dust of the earth," and this accords with the interpretation of Good and Rosenmüller. So Castellio renders it, and so Luther—*Tropfen flüssen die Erde weg.* This is probably the true sense. The Hebrew word rendered, "the things which grow out" (נֶפֶץ), means, properly, that which is poured out, from נָפַץ, to pour out, to spread out, and is applied to grain produced spontaneously from kernels of the former year, without new seed. Lev. xxv. 5—11; 2 Kings xix. 29. See Notes on Isa. xxxvii. 30. But here it probably means a flood—that which flows out—and which washes away the earth. ¶ *The dust of the earth.* The earth or the land on the margin of streams. The sense is, that as the flood sweeps away the soil, so the hope of man was destroyed. ¶ *Thou destroyest the hope of*

By death—for so the connexion

hope of man.

20 Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.

demands. It is the language of despondency. The tree would spring up, but man would die, like a removed rock, like land washed away, like a falling mountain, and would revive no more. If Job had at times a hope of a future state, yet that hope seems at times, also, wholly to fail him, and he sinks down in utter despondency. At best, his views of the future world were dark and obscure. He seems to have had at no time clear conceptions of heaven—of the future holiness and blessedness of the righteous; but he anticipated, at best, only a residence in the world of disembodied spirits—dark, dreary, sad;—a world to which the grave was the entrance, and where the light was as darkness. With such anticipations, we are not to wonder that his mind sank into despondency; nor are we to be surprised at the expressions which he so often used, and which seem so inconsistent with the feelings which a child of God ought to cherish. In our trials, let us imitate his patience, but not his despondency; let us copy his example in his better moments, and when he was full of confidence in God, and not his language of complaint, and his unhappy reflections on the government of the Most High.

20. *Thou prevailest for ever against him.* Thou dost always show that thou art stronger than he is. He never shows that he is able to contend with God. ¶ *And he passeth.* He cannot stand before thee, but is vanquished, and passes off the stage of being. ¶ *Thou changest his countenance.* Possibly the allusion is to the change produced by death. The countenance that glowed with health, and was flushed with beauty and hope—blooming as the rose—is made pale as the lily under the hand of God. What an affecting exhibition of the power of God! ¶ *And sendest him away.* This language seems to be that of expectation that man

21 His sons come to honor, and he knoweth *it* not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth *it* not of them.

would still live though he was sent away; but all his hopes on earth were blasted, and he went away from his friends and possessions to return no more.

21. *His sons come to honor, and he knoweth it not.* He is unacquainted with what is passing on the earth. Even should that occur which is most gratifying to a parent's heart; should his children rise to stations of honor and influence, he would not be permitted to enjoy the happiness which every father feels when his sons do well. This is suggested as one of the evils of death. ¶ *They are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them.* He is not permitted to sympathize with them, or to sustain them in their trials. This is another of the evils of death. When his children need his counsel and advice, he is not permitted to give it. He is taken away from his family, and revisits them no more.

22. *But his flesh upon him shall have pain.* Dr. Good renders this, "his flesh shall drop away from him." This is evidently a representation of the state of the man after he was dead. He would be taken away from hope and from his friends. His body would be committed to the grave, and his spirit would go to the world of shades. The image in the mind seems to have been, that his flesh would *suffer*. It would be cold and chill, and would be devoured by worms. There seems to have been an impression that the soul would be conscious of this in its distant and silent abode, and the description is given of the grave *as if* the body were conscious there, and the turning back to dust were attended with pain. This thought is that which makes the grave so gloomy now. We think of *ourselves* in its darkness and chilliness. We insensibly suppose that we shall be conscious there. And hence we dread so much the lonely, sad, and gloomy residence in the tomb. The meaning of the word rendered "shall have pain"

22 But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn.

—כָּאֵן—is to be sore, to be grieved, afflicted, sad. It is by the imagination that pain is here attributed to the dead body. But Job was not alone in this. We all feel the same thing when we think of death. ¶ *And his soul within him shall mourn.* The soul that is within him shall be sad; that is, in the land of shades. So Virgil, speaking of the death of Lausus, says,

"Tum vita per auras

Concessit *mæsta* ad manes, corpusque reliquit." *ÆN.* x. 819.

The idea of Job is, that it would leave all the comforts of this life; it would be separate from family and friends; it would go lonely and sad to the land of shades and of night. Job dreaded it. He loved life; and in the future world, as it was presented to his view, there was nothing to charm and attract. There he expected to wander in darkness and sadness; and from that gloomy world he expected to return no more for ever. Eichhorn, however, has rendered this verse so as to give a different signification, which may, perhaps, be the true one.

Nur über sich ist er betrübt  
Nur sich betrauert er.

"His troubles pertain only to himself; his grief relates to himself alone." According to this, the idea is, that he must bear all his sorrows alone, and for himself. He is cut off from the living, and is not permitted to share in the joys and sorrows of his posterity, nor they in his. He has no knowledge of anything that pertains to them, nor do they participate in his griefs. What a flood of light and joy would have been poured on his soul by the Christian hope, and by the revelation of the truth that there is a world of perfect light and joy for the righteous—in heaven! And what thanks do we owe to the Great Author of our religion—to him who is "the Resurrection and the Life"—that we are permitted to look upon the grave with hearts full of peace and joy.

## CHAPTER XV.

## ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

THIS chapter contains the second speech of Eliphaz, and begins the second series of the controversy, which continues to the close of ch. xxi. As in the other series of the arguments, Eliphaz is the first speaker. See an account of his character in the Notes on ch. ii. 11, and on chs. iv., v. He is the most argumentative, calm, and reasonable of those who maintain the argument against Job. His speech here consists of two parts. I. The first extends to ver. 13. In this he accuses Job of vanity and unprofitable talk (vs. 2, 3); reproaches him with having cast off the fear of God, and with pursuing a train of argument that was full proof that he had done it (ver. 3); says that the positions which he had maintained about the government of God were ample demonstration of his guilt (vs. 5, 6); accuses him of arrogance and self-confidence, for speaking as if he had been the first man that was born, or was made before the hills, or understood the secret of God (vs. 7, 8); says that they had had more ample opportunities for observation than he had, since there were men among them old enough to be his father (vs. 9, 10); and asks him why he suffers himself to give utterance to expressions like these (vs. 11—13.) II. In the second part (vs. 14—35), he gives a graphic description of the misery which in various ways will pursue a wicked man. This part is made up, apparently, either of a string of apothegms, or is a fragment of an ancient poem, which he now quotes as fully sustaining the position that the calamities of Job are proofs of guilt. The argument is, that calamity will overtake the wicked; and that, therefore, when calamities exist, there is proof of guilt that may be measured by the calamity. As Job had been afflicted in an uncommon degree, the inference in the mind of Eliphaz from this principle was unavoidable, that he was a man of uncommon guilt. In illustrating this position, he urges the following considerations: (1.) He repeats the solemn truth which had been communicated to him in the fearful vision which he describes in ch. iv., that man could not be pure before God, and that even the angels are chargeable with folly, vs. 14—16. (2.) He appeals to the fathers, and professes to quote the sentiments of the observing men of former times in proof of what would be the consequences of eminent wickedness, vs. 17—19. (3.) He then states, more particularly, what would be the condition of the guilty man. He would travail in pain; he would be subject to alarms; he would have no security in prosperity; he would be compelled to wander abroad for bread, the trouble and anguish would come upon him, vs. 20—24. (4.) He states as a *reason* for this, that he makes an assault on God, and rushes upon his buckler; he impinges on the great principles of the divine government and law, and he cannot prosper, vs. 25—27. (5.) He then shows that such a man *must* be desolate; he could neither be rich, nor honoured, nor long-lived, vs. 27—30. (6.) And he concludes his discourse by an exhortation not to trust in vanity, and not to rely on the hope of the hypocrite; for in the midst of his confidence and security he would be cut down before his time—like unripe fruit, or like a fading flower, vs. 31—35. All this was so applicable to the circumstances of Job, and was so obviously designed to be a description of his condition, though his name is not mentioned, that there is no wonder that he replied with so much severity in the following chapter. The conclusions of Eliphaz were the more deeply felt by Job, because they were communicated as the result of long observation, and strengthened by the undisputed maxims of antiquity.

**T**HEN answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said, vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind?

2 Should a wise man utter <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *knowledge of wind.*

2. *Should a wise man.* Referring to Job, and to his claims to be esteemed wise. See ch. xii. 3; xiii. 2, 6. The argument of Eliphaz here is, that the sentiments which Job had advanced were a sufficient refutation of his pretensions to wisdom. A wise man would not be guilty of *mere talk*, or of using language that conveyed no ideas. ¶ *Utter.* Literally, *answer*. It refers to the replies which Job had made to

the arguments of his friends. ¶ *Vain knowledge.* Marg., *Knowledge of wind.* So the Hebrew. See ch. vi. 26; vii. 7. The *wind* is used to denote what is unsubstantial, vain, changing. Here it is used as an emblem of remarks which were vain, empty, and irrelevant. ¶ *And fill his belly.* Fill his mind with unsubstantial arguments or sentiments—as little fitted for utility as the east wind is for food. The image is, “he

3 Should he reason with unprofitable talk? <sup>a</sup> or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?

a 1 Ti. 6. 4, 5.

fills himself with mere wind, and then blows it out under pretence of delivering the maxims of wisdom." ¶ *With the east wind?* The east wind was not only tempestuous and vehement, but sultry, and destructive to vegetation. It passed over vast deserts, and was characterized by great dryness and heat. It is used here to denote a manner of discourse that had in it nothing profitable.

3. *Should he reason with unprofitable talk?* It does not become a man professing to be wise to make use of words that are nothing to the purpose. The sense is, that what Job said amounted to just nothing.

4. *Yea, thou castest off fear.* Marg., *Makest void.* Fear here means the fear or reverence of God; and the idea is, that Job had not maintained a proper veneration or respect for his Maker in his argument. He had defended principles and made assertions which implied great disrespect for the Deity. If those doctrines were true; if he was right in his views about God, then he was not a being who could be revered. No confidence could be placed in his government; no worship of such a being could be maintained. Eliphaz does not refer here so much to what was *personal* with Job, as to his *principles*. He does not mean so much to affirm that he himself had lost all reverence for God, as that his arguments led to that. Job had maintained that God did not in this life reward and punish men strictly according to their deserts. If this was so, Eliphaz says, then it would be impossible to honour him, and religion and worship would be at an end. The Hebrew word rendered "castest off"—more accurately rendered in the margin, "makest void" (פָּחַד)—implies this. ¶ *And restrainest prayer before God.* Marg., *speech.* The Hebrew word (דַּבָּר) means properly *meditation*—and particularly meditation

4 Yea, thou <sup>1</sup> castest off fear, and restrainest <sup>2</sup> prayer before God.

<sup>1</sup> *makest void.* <sup>2</sup> *or, speech.*

about divine things. Ps. cxix. 97. Then it means *devotion*—as to meditate on divine things is a part of devotion. It may be applied to any part of devotion, and seems to be not improperly rendered *prayer*. It is that devotion which finds utterance in the language of prayer. The word rendered *restrainest*—פָּחַד—means to *shave off*—like the beard; then to cut off, to take away, detract, withhold; and the idea here is, that the views which Job maintained were such as to *sap the very foundations of religion*. If God treated the righteous and the wicked alike, the one would have nothing to hope, and the other nothing to fear. There could be no ground of encouragement to pray to him. How could the righteous pray to him, unless there was evidence that he was the friend of virtue? How could they hope for his special blessing, if he were disposed to treat the good and the bad alike? Why was it not just as well to live in sin as to be holy? And how could such a being be the object of confidence or prayer? Eliphaz mistook the meaning of Job, and pressed his positions further than he intended; and Job was not entirely able to vindicate his position, or to show how the consequences stated by Eliphaz could be avoided. *They both wanted the complete and full view of the future state of retribution revealed in the gospel, and that would have removed the whole difficulty.* But I see not how the considerations here urged by this ancient sage of the tendency of Job's doctrine can be avoided, if it be applied to the views of those who hold that all men will be saved at death. If that be the truth, then who can fail to see that the tendency must be to make men cast off the fear of God, and to undermine all devotion and prayer? Why should men pray, if all are to be treated alike at death? How can men worship and honour a being who will treat the good

5 For thy mouth <sup>1</sup> uttereth thine iniquity, and thou choosest the tongue of the crafty.

6 Thine <sup>b</sup> own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: yea, thine own lips testify against thee.

<sup>1</sup> teacheth.

<sup>b</sup> Lu. 19. 22.

and the bad alike? How can we have confidence in a being who makes no distinction in regard to character? And what inducement can there be to be pious, when all men shall be made as happy as they can be for ever whether they are pious or not? We are not to wonder, therefore, that the system tends everywhere to sap the foundations of virtue and religion; that it makes no man better; and that where it prevails, it banishes religion and prayer from the world.

5. *For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity.* Marg., *teacheth*. That is, "your whole argument shows that you are a guilty man. A man who can defend such positions about God cannot be a pious man, or have any proper veneration for the Most High." A man may pursue an argument, and defend positions, that shall as certainly show that he is destitute of religion as though he lived an abandoned life; and he who holds opinions that are dishonorable to God, can no more be a pious man than if he dishonored God by violating his law. ¶ *Thou choosest the tongue of the crafty.* Instead of pursuing an argument with candor and sincerity, you have resorted to miserable sophisms, such as cunning disputants use. You have not showed a disposition to ascertain and defend the truth, but have relied on the arts and evasions of the subtle disputant and the rhetorician. His whole discourse, according to Eliphaz, was a work of mere art, designed to blind his hearers; to deceive them with a favorable opinion of his piety; and to give some plausible, but delusive view of the government of God.

6. *Thine own mouth condemneth thee.* That is, the sentiments which you have

7 *Art thou the first man that was born? or wast thou made before <sup>c</sup> the hills?*

8 Hast <sup>d</sup> thou heard the secret of God? and dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?

<sup>c</sup> Ps. 90. 2. Pr. 8. 25.

<sup>d</sup> Ro. 11. 34. 1 Co. 2. 11.

uttered show that you cannot be a pious man.

7. *Art thou the first man that was born?* Hast thou lived ever since the creation, and treasured up all the wisdom of past times, that thou dost now speak so arrogantly and confidently? This question was asked, because, in the estimation of Eliphaz and his friends, wisdom was supposed to be connected with long life, and with an opportunity for extended and varied observation. See ver. 10. Job they regarded as comparatively a young man. ¶ *Wast thou made before the hills?* The mountains and the hills are often represented as being the oldest of created objects, probably because they are the most ancient things that appear on earth. Springs dry up, and waters change their beds; cities are built and decay; kingdoms rise and fall, and all the monuments of human skill and art perish; but the hills and mountains remain the same from age to age. Thus in Psalm xc. 2:

Before the mountains were brought forth,  
Or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world,  
Even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God.

So in Prov. viii. 25, in the description of wisdom:

Before the mountains were settled,  
Before the hills was I brought forth.

So the hills are called "everlasting" (Gen. xlix. 26), in allusion to their great antiquity and permanence. And so we, in common parlance, have a similar expression when we say of any thing that "it is as old as the hills." The question which Eliphaz intends to ask here of Job is, whether he had lived from the creation, and had observed everything?

8. *Hast thou heard the secret of God?*

9 What <sup>c</sup> knowest thou, that we know not? *what* understandest thou, which is not in us?

10 With us *are* both the gray-

headed <sup>f</sup> and very aged men, much elder than thy father.

11 *Are* the consolations of God small with thee? is there any secret thing with thee?

f c. 32. 6—9.

Literally, “in the secret of God hast thou heard”—רָמְסוֹת. The word rendered *secret* (רָמְסוֹת) means, properly, a couch, or cushion, on which one reclines—whether for sleep or at a table, or as a divan. Hence it means a divan, or circle of persons sitting together for familiar conversation, Jer. vi. 11, xv. 17; or of judges, counsellors, or advisers for consultation, as the word *divan* is now used in Oriental countries. Ps. lxxxix. 8; Jer. xxxiii. 18. Then it means any consultation, counsel, familiar intercourse, or intimacy. Ps. lv. 15; Prov. xv. 22. Here God is represented, in Oriental language, as seated in a *divan*, or council of state: there is deliberation about the concerns of his government; important questions are agitated and decided; and Eliphaz asks of Job whether *he* had been admitted to that council, and had heard those deliberations; and whether, if he had not, he was qualified to pronounce, as he had done, on the plans and purposes of the Almighty. ¶ *And dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?* Having obtained the secret of that council, art thou now keeping it wholly to thyself—as a prime minister might be supposed to keep the purposes resolved on in the divan? “Hast thou listened in the council of JEHOVAH, and dost thou now reserve all wisdom to thyself?”

9. *What knowest thou, that we know not?* What pretensions or claims to wisdom have you which we have not? We have had, at least, equal advantages, and may be *presumed* to know as much as you.

10. *With us are both the grayheaded.* That is, *some* of us who are here are much older than thy father; or we express the sentiments of such aged men. Job had admitted (ch. xii. 12) that with the aged was wisdom, and in length of days understanding; and Eli-

phaz here urges that on that principle he and his friends had a claim to be heard. It would seem from this, that Job was very far from being regarded as an old man, and would probably be esteemed as in middle life. The Targum (Chaldee) refers this to Eliphaz himself and his two friends. “Truly Eliphaz, who is hoary-headed (אֵלִיפָאז), and Bildad, the long-lived (בִּלְדָּד), are with us, and Zophar, who is older than thy father.” But it is not certain that he meant to confine the remark to them. It seems to me probable that this whole discussion occurred in the presence of others, and perhaps was a *public* contest. It is clear, I think, that Elihu was present, and heard it all (see ch. xxxii. 4), and it would accord well with Oriental habits to suppose that this was a trial of skill, which many were permitted to witness, and which was continued for a considerable time. Eliphaz may, therefore, have meant to say, that among his friends, who had assembled to hear this debate, there were not a few who coincided with him in sentiment, who were much more aged than Job, and who had had much longer experience in the world.

11. *Are the consolations of God small with thee?* The “consolations of God” here refer probably to those considerations which had been suggested by Eliphaz and his friends, and which he takes to be the “consolations” which God had furnished for the afflicted. He asks whether they were regarded by Job as of little value? Whether he was not willing to take such consolations as God had provided, and to allow them to sustain him instead of permitting himself to inveigh against God. The LXX render this, “thou hast been chastised less than thy sins deserve. Thou hast spoken with excessive haughtiness!” But the true idea seems to be,



12 Why doth thine heart carry thee away? and what do thy eyes wink at,

that Eliphaz regarded the considerations adduced by him and his friends as the gracious consolations which God had provided for men in affliction, and as the results of all former reflections on the design of God in sending trial. He now represents Job as regarding them as of no value, and maintaining sentiments directly at variance with them. ¶ *Is there any secret thing with thee?* Noyes renders this, "and words so full of kindness to thee;" that is, are they of no account to you? So Dr. Good and Wemyss, "or the addresses of kindness to thyself?" Luther translates it, "but thou hast, perhaps, yet a secret portion with thee." Rosenmüller, "and words most guilty spoken towards thee." The LXX render it, "and thou hast spoken proudly beyond measure"—μεγάλως ὑπερβαλλόντως λελάληκας. The word which occurs in the Hebrew—לָאֹז, *lā'ōz*, when it is a single word, and used as a verb, means to wrap around, to muffle, to cover, to conceal, and then to be secret—whence the Greek λάθω, and λαθάνω, and the Latin *lateo*. In this sense it is understood here by our translators. But it may be also a compound word—from וַח, a gentle sound, murmur, whisper; whence it is used adverbially—וַחֲוֹ and וַחֲוֹ—gently, softly, slowly—as of the slow gait of a mourner, 1 Kings xxi. 27; and of water gently flowing, as the water of Siloam, Isa. viii. 6. And hence, also, it may refer to words flowing kindly or gently towards any one; and this seems to be the meaning here. Eliphaz asks whether Job could despise or undervalue the words spoken so gently and kindly towards him? A singular illustration, to be sure, of kindness, but still showing how the friends of Job estimated their own remarks.

12. *Why doth thine heart carry thee away?* Why do you allow your feelings to control you in spite of the deci-

13 That thou turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest such words go out of thy mouth?

g Mal. 3. 13.

sions of the understanding? Eliphaz means to represent him as wholly under the influence of passion, instead of looking calmly and coolly at things as they were, and listening to the results of past experience and observation. ¶ *And what do thy eyes wink at.* This expression has given considerable perplexity to commentators. Rosenmüller (and after him Noyes) remarks that the expression indicates pride, haughtiness, and arrogance. In Ps. xxxv. 19, it is an indication of joyfulness or triumph over a prostrate foe:

Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me;  
Neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.

In Prov. vi. 13, it is an indication of a haughty, froward, self-confident person:

A haughty person, a wicked man,  
Walketh with a froward mouth;  
He winketh with his eyes,  
He speaketh with his feet,  
He teacheth with his fingers.

The Hebrew word (וַחֲוֹ) occurs nowhere else, and it is, therefore, difficult to determine its true signification. The most probable meaning is, to wink with the eyes as a gesture of pride and insolence. Comp. Notes on Isa. iii. 16. The Vulgate renders it, *attonitos habes oculos?*—"Why, as though meditating great things, hast thou eyes of astonishment?" Sept., "Why are thine eyes elevated?" Schultens renders it, "Why do thine eyes roll fury?"—*Quid fremittunt volvunt oculi tui?* Luther, "Why art thou so proud?" There can be no reasonable doubt that the word conveys the idea of pride and haughtiness manifested in some way by the eyes.

13. *That thou turnest thy spirit.* That your mind is turned against God instead of acquiescing in his dealings. The views of Job he traces to pride and to overweening self-confidence, and perhaps not improperly.

14 What <sup>h</sup> is man, that he should be clean? and *he which* is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?

15 Behold, he putteth no trust

<sup>h</sup> Ps. 14. 3. Pr. 20. 9. Ep. 2. 3. 1 Jno. 1. 8, 10.

14. *What is man, that he should be clean?* The object of Eliphaz in this, is to overturn the positions of Job that he was righteous, and had been punished beyond his deserts. He had before maintained (ch. iv. 7) that no one ever perished being innocent, and that the righteous were not cut off. This was with him a favorite position; and indeed the whole drift of the argument maintained by him and his friends was, to prove that uncommon calamities were proof of uncommon guilt. Job had insisted on it that he was a righteous man, and had not deserved the calamities which had come upon him—a position which Eliphaz seems to have regarded as an assertion of innocence. To meet this he now maintains that *no one* is righteous; that all are born of women are guilty; and in proof of this he goes back to the oracle which had made so deep an impression on his mind, and to the declaration then made to him that no one was pure before God. Ch. iv. He does not repeat it exactly as the oracle was then delivered to him, but adverts to the substance of it, and regards it as final and indisputable. The meaning is, "What are all the pretensions of man to purity, when even the angels are regarded as impure and the heavens unclean?" ¶ *He which is born of a woman.* Another mode of denoting man. No particular argument to maintain the doctrine of man's depravity is couched in the fact that he is born of a woman. The sense is, simply, how can any one of the human family be pure?

15. *Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints.* In ch. iv. 18, it is, "in his servants," but no doubt the same thing is intended. The reference is to the angels, called there *servants*, and here *saints* (קְדוֹשִׁים), *holy ones*. See Notes on ch. iv. 18. ¶ *Yea, the heavens are not*

in his saints; yea, the heavens <sup>l</sup> are not clean in his sight.

16 How much more abominable and filthy <sup>k</sup> is man, which drinketh <sup>l</sup> iniquity like water?

<sup>l</sup> c. 25. 5. <sup>k</sup> Ps. 53. 3. <sup>l</sup> c. 20. 12. Pr. 19. 28.

*clean in his sight.* In ch. iv. 18, "and his angels he charged with folly." The general idea is the same. God is so holy, that all things else seem to be impure. The very heavens seem to be unclean when compared with him. We are not to understand this as meaning that the heavens are defiled; that there is sin and corruption there, and that they are loathsome in the sight of God. The object is to set forth the exceeding purity of God, and the greatness of his holiness. This sentiment seemed to be a kind of proverb, or a *common-place* in theology among the sages of Arabia. Thus it occurs in ch. xxv. 5, in the speech of Bildad, when he had nothing to say but to repeat the most common-place moral and theological adages—

Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not;  
Yea, the stars are not pure in his sight:  
How much less man, that is a worm,  
And the son of man, which is a worm!

16. *How much more abominable and filthy is man.* How much more than the angels, and than the heavens. In ch. iv. 19, the image is somewhat different. There it is, how can man be the object of the divine confidence, since he lives in a house of clay, and is so frail? Here the image is more striking and forcible. The word rendered *filthy* (רָעָה) means, in Arabic, to be *sour*, as milk, and then to be corrupt, in a moral sense. Ps. xiv. 3; liii. 4. Here it means that man is defiled and polluted, and this declaration is a remarkable illustration of the ancient belief of the depravity of man. ¶ *Which drinketh iniquity like water?* This is still a true, though a melancholy account of man. He loves sin, and is as greedy of it as a thirsty man is of water. He practises it as if it were his very nature—as much so as it is to drink. Perhaps, too, there may be an allusion, as Dr. Good supposes, to the

17 I will shew thee, hear me; and that *which* I have seen I will declare;

18 Which wise men have told from their fathers, and have not hid it:

19 Unto whom <sup>m</sup> alone the

*m* De. 32. 8

large draught of water which the camel makes, implying that man is exceedingly greedy of iniquity. Comp. ch. xx. 12; xxxiv. 7; Prov. xix. 28.

17. *I will shew thee, &c.* The remainder of this chapter is a violent declamation, designed to overwhelm Job with the proofs of personal guilt. Eliphaz professes to urge nothing which had not been handed down from his ancestors, and was the result of careful observation. What he says is made up of apophthegms and maxims that were regarded as containing the results of ancient wisdom, all meaning that God would punish the wicked, or that the wicked would be treated according to their deserts. The implied inference all along was, that Job, who had so many proofs of the divine displeasure, must be a wicked man.

18. *Which wise men have told from their fathers.* Which they have received from their ancestors and communicated to others. Knowledge among the ancients was communicated chiefly by tradition from father to son. They had few or no written records, and hence they embodied the results of their observation in brief, sententious maxims, and transmitted them from one generation to another. ¶ *And have not hid it.* They have freely communicated the result of their observations to others.

19. *Unto whom alone the earth was given.* The land; the land or country here they dwelt. He refers to the period before they became intermingled with other nations, and before they imbibed any sentiments or opinions from strangers. The meaning is, "I will give you the result of the observations of the golden age of the world, when our fathers dwelt alone, and it could not be pretended that they had been corrupted

earth was given, and no stranger <sup>n</sup> passed among them.

20 The wicked man travaileth <sup>o</sup> with pain all *his* days, and the number <sup>p</sup> of years is hidden to the oppressor.

*n* Joel 3. 17. *o* Ec. 9. 3. *p* Ps. 90. 12.

by foreign philosophy; and when in morals and in sentiment they were pure." Probably all nations look back to such times of primeval simplicity, and freedom from corruption, when the sentiments on morals and religion were comparatively pure, and before the people became corrupt by the importation of foreign opinions. It is a pleasing delusion to look back to such times—to some innocent Arcadia, or to a golden age—but usually all such retrospections are the mere work of fancy. The world really grows wiser as it grows older; and in the progress of society it is a rare thing when the present is not more pure and happy than its early stages. The comforts, privileges, and intelligence of the patriarchal age were not to be compared with those which *we* enjoy—any more than the condition of the wandering Arab is to be preferred to the quiet, peace, intelligence, and order of a calm, Christian home. ¶ *No stranger passed among them.* No foreigner came to corrupt their sentiments by an admixture of strange doctrines. "Eliphaz here speaks like a genuine Arab, whose pride is in his tongue, his sword, and his pure blood." *Umbreit.* It is possible, as Rosenmüller suggests, that Eliphaz means to insinuate that Job had been corrupted by the sentiments of the Chaldeans and Sabeans, and had departed from the pure doctrines of earlier times.

20. *Travaileth with pain.* That is, his sorrows are like the pains of parturition. Eliphaz means to say that he is a constant sufferer. ¶ *All his days.* It seems difficult to see how they could have ever formed this universal maxim. It is certainly not literally true now; nor was it ever. But in order to convey the doctrine that the wicked would be

21 <sup>1</sup> A dreadful sound is <sup>q</sup> in his ears: in prosperity <sup>r</sup> the destroyer shall come upon him.

<sup>1</sup> a sound of fears.  
q Le. 26. 36.      r 1 Th. 5. 3.

punished in as pointed and striking a manner as possible, it was made to assume this universal form—meaning that the life of the wicked would be miserable. There is some reason to think that this and what follows to the close of the chapter, is an ancient fragment which Eliphaz rehearses as containing the sentiments of a purer age of the world. ¶ *And the number of years is hidden to the oppressor.* Wemyss renders this, “and a reckoning of years is laid up for the violent.” So also Dr. Good. The Vulgate renders it, “and the number of the years of his tyranny is uncertain.” Rosenmüller, Cocceius, Drusius, and some others suppose that there should be understood here, and repeated, the clause occurring in the first hemistich, and that it means, “and in the number of years which are laid up for the violent man, he is tortured with pain.” Luther renders it, “and to a tyrant is the number of his years concealed.” It is difficult to tell what the passage means. To me, the most probable interpretation is one which I have not met with in any of the books which I have consulted, and which may be thus expressed, “the wicked man will be tormented all his days.” To one who is an oppressor or tyrant, the number of his years is hidden. He has no *security* of life. He cannot calculate with any certainty on its continuance. The end is hid. A righteous man may make *some* calculation, and can see the probable end of his days. He may expect to see an honored old age. But tyrants are so often cut down suddenly; they so frequently perish by assassination; and robbers are so often unexpectedly overcome, that there is *no* calculation which can be formed in respect to the termination of their course. *Their* end is hid. They die suddenly and disappear. This suits the connexion; and the sentiment is, in the main, in accordance with facts as they occur.

22 He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness, and he is waited for of the sword.

21. *A dreadful sound is in his ears.* Marg., *A sound of fears.* He hears sudden, frightful sounds, and is alarmed. Or, when he thinks himself safe, he is suddenly surprised. The enemy steals upon him, and in his fancied security he dies. This sentiment might be illustrated at almost any length by the mode of savage warfare in this land, and by the sudden attacks which the American savage makes, in the silence of the night, on his unsuspecting foes. The Chaldee renders this, “the fear of the terrors in Gehenna are in his ears; when the righteous dwell in peace and eternal life, destruction comes upon him.” ¶ *In prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him.* When he supposes he is safe, and his affairs seem to be prosperous, then sudden destruction comes. See 1 Thess. v. 3. The history of wicked men, who have encompassed themselves with wealth, and, as they supposed, with everything necessary to happiness, and who have been suddenly cut off, would furnish all the instances which would be necessary to illustrate this sentiment of Eliphaz. See an exquisitely beautiful illustration of it in Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36:

I have seen the wicked in great power,  
And spreading himself like a green bay-tree.  
Yet he passed away, and lo, he was not;  
Yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

So, also, in Ps. lxxiii. 18—20:

Surely thou didst set them in slippery places;  
Thou castedst them down into destruction.  
How are they brought into desolation as in a moment!  
They are utterly consumed with terrors.  
As a dream when one awaketh,  
O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.

22. *He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness.* *Darkness* is used in the Bible, as elsewhere, to denote calamity; and the meaning here is, that the wicked man has not confidence (לֹא יִתְּמָן) that he shall return safely from impending danger. He is in con-

23 He wandereth abroad for bread, *saying*, Where is it? he knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand.

24 Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid; they shall prevail against him, as a king ready to the battle.

stant dread of assassination, or of some fearful evil. He is never secure; his mind is never calm; he lives in constant dread. This is still an accurate description of a man with a guilty conscience; for such a man lives in constant fear, and never feels any security that he is safe. ¶ *And he is waited for of the sword.* That is, he is destined for the sword. *Gesenius.*

23. *He wandereth abroad for bread.* The LXX render this, "he is destined to be food for vultures"—*κατατίναται δὲ εἰς οἶρα γυψίν.* The meaning of the Hebrew is, simply, that he will be reduced to poverty, and will not know where to obtain a supply for his returning wants. ¶ *He knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand.* He is assured that the period of calamity is not far remote. It must come. He has no security that it will not come immediately. The whole design of this is to show that there is no calmness and security for a wicked man; that in the midst of apparent prosperity, his soul is in constant dread.

24. *As a king ready to the battle.* Fully prepared for a battle; whom it would be vain to attempt to resist. So mighty would be the combined forces of trouble and anguish against him, that it would be vain to attempt to oppose them.

25. *For he stretcheth out his hand against God.* The hand is stretched out for battle. It wields the spear or the sword against an enemy. The idea here is, that the wicked man makes God an adversary. He does not contend with his fellow-man, with fate, with the elements, with evil angels, but with God. His opponent is an Almighty Being, and he cannot prevail against him. *Comp. Notes on Isa. xxvii. 4.*

25 For <sup>s</sup> he stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against <sup>t</sup> the Almighty.

26 He runneth upon him, *even* on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers:

*s* Is. 27. 4.

*t* c. 9. 4.

¶ *And strengtheneth himself.* As an army does that throws up a rampart, or constructs a fortification. The whole image here is taken from the practice of war; and the sense is, that a wicked man is really making war on the Almighty, and that in that war he *must* be vanquished. *Comp. ch. ix. 4.*

26. *He runneth upon him.* That is, upon God. The image here is taken from the mode in which men rushed into battle. It was with a violent concussion, and usually with a shout, that they might intimidate their foes, and overcome them at first with the violence of the shock. The mode of warfare is now changed, and it is the vaunted excellency of modern warfare that armies now go deliberately and calmly to put each other to death. ¶ *Even on his neck.* Literally, "with the neck"—*וְעַל צוֹרְקוֹ*. *Vulg., With erect neck—erecto collo.* *Sept., Contemptuously, or with pride—ὕβρει.* The idea seems to be, not that he ran upon the neck of his adversary—as would seem to be implied in our translation—but that he ran in a firm, haughty, confident manner, with a head erect and firm, as the indication of self-confidence, and a determined purpose to overcome his foe. See *Schultens in loc.* ¶ *Upon the thick bosses.* The word *boss* with us means a knob—a protuberant ornament of silver, brass, or ivory, on a harness or a bridle; then a protuberant part, a prominence, or a round or swelling body of any kind. The Hebrew word here used (*צֶדֶק*) means, properly, anything gibbous, convex, arched; and hence the *back*, as of animals. Applied to a shield, it means the convex part, or the back of it—the part which was presented to an enemy, and which was made swelling and strong,

27 Because <sup>u</sup> he covereth his face with his fatness, and maketh collops of fat on *his* flanks.

<sup>u</sup> Ps. 73. 7, &c.

called by the Greeks, ὀμφαλός, or μισομφάλιον. Gesenius supposes that the metaphor here is taken from soldiers, who joined their shields together, and thus rushed upon an enemy. This was one mode of ancient warfare, when an army or a phalanx united their shields in front, so that nothing could penetrate them, or so united them over their heads when approaching a fortress, that they could safely march under them as a covering. This, among the Romans and Greeks, was commonly practised when approaching a besieged town. One form of the *testudo*—the *χελώνη στρατιωτῶν* of the Greeks, was formed by the soldiers, pressed close together, and holding their shields over their heads in such a manner as to form a compact covering. J. H. Eschenburg, *Manual of Classical Literature*, by N. W. Fiske, Part III. § 147. The Vulgate renders this, “and he is armed with a fat neck”—*pingui cervice armatus est*. Schultens expresses the idea that is adopted by Gesenius, and refers to Arabic customs to show that shields were thus united in defending an army from a foe, or in making an attack on them. He says, also, that it is a common expression—a proverb—among the Arabs, “he turns the back of his shield” to denote that one is an adversary; and quotes a passage from Hamasa—“When a friend meets me with base suspicions, I turn to him the back of my shield—a proverb, whose origin is derived from the fact that a warrior turns the back of his shield to his foes.” Paxton supposes that the expression here is taken from single combat, which early prevailed. But the idea here is not that which our translation would seem to convey. It is not that he rushes upon or against the hard or thick shield of *the Almighty*—and that, therefore, he must meet resistance and be overcome; it is that he rushes upon God WITH his own shield. He puts himself in the attitude of a warrior. He turns the

28 And he dwelleth in desolate cities, *and* in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps.

boss of his own shield against God, and becomes his antagonist. He is his enemy. The omission of the word *with* in the passage—or the preposition which is in the Hebrew (א), has led to this erroneous translation. The passage is often quoted in a popular manner to denote that the sinner rushes upon God, and must meet resistance from his shield, or be overcome. It should be quoted only to denote that the sinner places himself in an attitude of opposition to God, and is his enemy. ¶ *Of his bucklers*. Of his shields (קִשְׁתֵּי)—that is, of the shields which the sinner has; not the shields of God. The shield was a well-known instrument of war, usually made with a rim of wood or metal, and covered with skins, and carried on the left arm. See Notes on Isa. xxi. 5. The outer surface was made rounding from the centre to the edge, and was smoothly polished, so that darts or arrows would glide off and not penetrate.

27. *Because he covereth his face with his fatness*. That is, he not only stretches out his hand against God (ver. 25) and rushes upon him as an armed foe (ver. 26), but he gives himself up to a life of luxury, gluttony, and licentiousness; and therefore these calamities must come upon him. This is designed to be a description of a luxurious and licentious person—a man who is an enemy of God, and who, therefore, must incur his displeasure. ¶ *And maketh collops of fat*. Like an ox that is fattened. The word *collop* properly means, “a small slice of meat, a piece of flesh” (*Webster*), but here it means a thick piece, or a mass. The word is used in this sense in New England. The sense is, that he becomes excessively fat and gross—as they usually do who live in sensual indulgence and who forget God.

28. *And he dwelleth*. Or rather, “therefore he shall dwell.” As a con-

29 He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue, neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.

30 He shall not depart out of darkness; the flame shall dry up

sequence of his opposing God, and devoting himself to a life of sensuality and ease, he shall dwell in a desolate place. Instead of living in affluence and in a splendid city, he shall be compelled to take up his abode in places that have been deserted and abandoned. Such places—like Petra or Babylon now—became the temporary lodgings of caravans and travellers, or the abodes of outcasts and robbers. The meaning here is, that the proud and wicked man shall be ejected from his palace, and compelled to seek a refuge far away from the usual haunts of men. ¶ *Which are ready to become heaps.* Which are just ready to tumble into ruin.

29. *He shall not be rich.* That is, he shall not continue rich; or he shall not again become rich. He shall be permanently poor. ¶ *Neither shall his substance continue.* His property. ¶ *Neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof.* Nöyes renders this, "And his possessions shall not be extended upon the earth." Wemyss, "Nor shall he be master of his own desires." Good, "Nor their success spread abroad in the land." Luther, Und sein Glück wird sich nicht ausbreiten im Lande—"And his fortune shall not spread itself abroad in the land." Vulg., "Neither shall he send his root in the earth"—*neq mittet in terra radicem suam.* The LXX, οὐ μὴ βάλην ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν σκιάν—"and shall not cast a shadow upon the earth."

The word rendered *perfection* (תְּמִלָּה) is commonly supposed to be from תָּמַל, from תָּמַל, to finish, to procure, and hence the noun may be applied to that which is *procured*—and thus may denote possessions. According to this, the correct rendering is, "and he does not extend their possessions abroad in the land; that is, his possessions do not extend abroad." Gesenius supposes,

his branches, and by the breath of his mouth shall he go away.

31 Let not him that is deceived trust<sup>x</sup> in vanity: for vanity shall be his recompence.

\* Isa. 59. 4.

however, that the word is a corruption for מִקְלָה—their flocks. I see no objection, however, to its being regarded as meaning *possessions*—and then the sense is, that he would fail in that which is so much the object of ambition with every avaricious man—that his possessions should extend through the land. Comp. Notes on Isa. v. 8.

30. *He shall not depart out of darkness.* He shall not escape from calamity. See ver. 22. He shall not be able to rise again, but shall be continually poor. ¶ *The flame shall dry up his branches.* As the fire consumes the green branches of a tree, so shall punishment do to him. This comparison is very forcible, and the idea is, that the man who has been prospered as a tree shall be consumed—as the fire consumes a tree when it passes through the branches. The comparison of a prosperous man with a tree is very common, and very beautiful. Thus the Psalmist says,

I have seen the wicked in great power,  
And spreading himself like a green bay tree.  
Ps. xxxvii. 35.

Comp. Ps. xcii. 12, 13. The aged Skenandoah—a chief of the Oneida tribe of Indians, said, "I am an aged hemlock. The winds of an hundred winters have whistled through my branches. I am dead at the top. My branches are falling," &c. ¶ *And by the breath of his mouth shall he go away.* That is, by the breath of the mouth of God. God is not, indeed, specified, but it is not unusual to speak of him in this manner. The image here seems to be that of the destruction of a man by a burning wind or by lightning. As a tree is dried up, or is rent by lightning, or is torn up from the roots by a tempest sent by the Deity, so the wicked will be destroyed.

31. *Let not him that is deceived trust*

32 It shall be <sup>1</sup> accomplished before <sup>y</sup> his time, and his branch shall not be green.

<sup>1</sup> or, cut off.

y Ps. 55. 23.

*in vanity.* The sense is, "Let him not trust in vanity. He will be deceived. Vanity will be his recompence." The idea is, that a man should not confide in that which will furnish no support. He should not rely on his wealth and rank; his houses and lands; his servants; his armies, or his power, if he is wicked; for all this is vain. He needs some better reliance, and that can be found only in a righteous life. The word *vanity* here means that which is unsubstantial; which cannot uphold or sustain; which will certainly give way. ¶ *For vanity shall be his recompence.* He will find only vanity. He will be stripped of all his honors and possessions.

32. *It shall be accomplished before his time.* Marg., cut off. The image here is that of a tree, which had been suggested in ver. 30. Here it is followed up by various illustrations drawn from the flower, the fruit, &c., all of which are designed to denote the same thing—that a wicked man will not be permanently prosperous; he will not live and flourish as he would if he were righteous. He will be like a tree that is cut down before its proper time, or that casts its flowers and fruits and brings nothing to perfection. The phrase here literally is, "It shall not be filled up in its time;" that is, a wicked man will be cut off before he has filled up the measure of his days, like a tree that decays and falls before its proper time. A similar idea occurs in Ps. lv. 23. "Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days." As a general fact, this is all true, and the observation of the ancient Idumeans was correct. The temperate live longer than the intemperate; the chaste longer than the licentious; he that controls and governs his passions longer than he who gives the reins to them; and he who leads a life of honesty and virtue longer than he who lives for crime. Pure religion makes a man temperate, sober, chaste,

33 He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine, and shall cast off his flower as the olive.

calm, dispassionate, and equable in his temper; saves from broils, contentions, and strifes; subdues the angry passions, and thus tends to lengthen out life. ¶ *His branch shall not be green.* It shall be dried up and withered away—retaining the image of a tree.

33. *He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine.* The idea here is, that the wicked man shall be like a vine that casts off its grapes while they are yet sour and green, and brings none to perfection. Comp. Notes on Isa. xviii. 5. Scott renders this,

"As when the vine her half-grown berries showers,  
Or poisoned olive her unfolding flowers."

It would seem from this passage that the vine might be so blasted by a hot wind or other cause, as to cast its unripe grapes to the earth. The employment of a figure of this kind to illustrate an idea supposes that such a case was familiar to those who were addressed. It is well known that in the East the grape and the olive might be blasted while in blossom, or when the fruit was *setting*, as all fruit may be. The injury is usually done in the flower, or when the fruit is just forming. Yet our observations of the effects of the burning winds that pass over the deserts on fruit that is half formed, in blasting it and causing it to fall, are too limited to allow us to come to any definite conclusion in regard to such effects in general. Any one, however, can see the *beauty* of this image. The plans and purposes of wicked men are immature. Nothing is carried to perfection. They are cut off, their plans are blasted, and all the results of their living are like the sour, hard, crabbed, and useless fruit that falls from the tree before it is ripe. The results of the life of the righteous, on the other hand, are like a tree loaded with ripe and mellow fruit—their plans are brought to maturity, and resemble the rich and heavy clusters of grapes, or the abun-



34 For the congregation of <sup>z</sup> hypocrites *shall be* desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of <sup>a</sup> bribery.

<sup>z</sup> c. 27. 8. Is. 33. 14.

<sup>a</sup> Am. 5. 11, 12.

dant fruits of the olive when ripe. ¶ *And shall cast off his flower as the olive.* The olive is a well known tree that abounds in the East. The fruit is chiefly valuable for the oil which it produces. Comp. Notes, Rom. xi. 17. The olive is liable to be blasted while the fruit is setting, or while the tree is in blossom. In Greece, a north-east wind often proves destructive to the olive, and the same may be true of other places. Dr. Chandler, speaking of Greece, says, "The olive groves are now, as anciently, a principal source of the riches of Athens. The crops had failed five years successively when we arrived; the cause assigned was a northerly wind, called Greco-tramontane, which destroyed the flower. The fruit is set in about a fortnight, when the apprehension from this unpropitious quarter ceases. The bloom in the following year was unhurt, and we had the pleasure of leaving the Athenians happy in the prospect of a plentiful harvest." A wicked man is here elegantly compared with such a tree that casts its flowers and produces no fruit.

34. *For the congregation of hypocrites.* The word rendered "congregation" here (קָהָל) means, properly, an appointed meeting; a meeting convened by appointment or at stated times (from קָהַל), and hence an assembly of any kind. It is commonly applied to an assembly for public worship; but it may refer to a more private company—a family, or circle of friends, dependents, &c. It refers here, I suppose, to such a community that a man can get around him in his own dwelling—his family, servants, dependents, &c. The word rendered "hypocrites" (הַיָּסוּדִים) is in the singular number, and should be so rendered here. It does not mean that a worshipping assembly composed of hypocrites would be desolate—which may be true—but that the community which a man who is a hypocrite can

35 They <sup>b</sup> conceive mischief, and bring forth <sup>1</sup> vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.

<sup>b</sup> Hos. 10. 13. Ga. 6. 7, 8. <sup>1</sup> or, iniquity.

gather around him shall be swept away. His children, his dependents, and his retinue of servants shall be taken away from him, and he shall be left to solitude. Probably there was an allusion here to Job, who had been stripped in this manner; or at any rate the remark was one, if it were a quotation from the ancient sayings of the Arabians, which Job could not but regard as applied to himself. ¶ *And fire shall consume.* This has all the appearance of being a proverb. The meaning is, that they who received a bribe would be certainly punished. ¶ *The tabernacles of bribery.* The tents or dwellings of those who receive bribes, and who, therefore, are easily corrupted, and have no solid principles. There is probably an allusion here to Job; and no doubt Eliphaz meant to apply this severe remark to him. Job was a *Sheik*, an *Emir*, a head of a tribe, and, therefore, a magistrate. See ch. xxix. 7, seq. Yet a part of his possessions and servants had been cut off by fire from heaven (ch. i. 16); and Eliphaz means, probably, to imply that it had been because he had been guilty of receiving a bribe. This ancient proverb declared that the dwellings of the man who could be bribed would be consumed by fire; and now he presumes that the fact that Job had been visited by the fire of heaven was full proof that he had been guilty in this manner. It was about on principles such as these that the reasoning of the friends of Job was conducted.

35. *They conceive mischief.* The meaning of this verse is, that they form and execute plans of evil. It is the characteristic of such men that they form such plans and live to execute them, and they must abide the consequences. All this was evidently meant for Job; and few things could be more trying to a man's patience than to sit and hear those ancient apophthegms, designed to describe the wicked, applied so unfeelingly to himself.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## ANALYSIS OF CHAPTERS XVI. AND XVII.

CHAPTERS xvi. and xvii. contain the reply of Job to the speech of Eliphaz, and should not have been separated. This speech of Job is full of the language of complaint and of solemn appeals to God. It is the language of bitterness and distress, where he felt that he was called to suffer almost beyond the power of endurance. In his former speech (chs. iv., v.), Eliphaz had shown *some* tenderness. He had exhorted him to return to God; he had assured him that his favour might be found if he would return. But now he had argued as if it were a settled point that Job was a wicked man, and as if there were no possibility that he could find favor. In reply to this, Job, in the following speech dwells on the following points:—He says that he had heard many such things, and that they imparted to him no consolation (vs. 2, 3); that it was no difficult matter to speak as they did, and that if they were to change places, he *could* use similar language, but *would not* do it; he would comfort them, and assuage their grief (vs. 4—7). He then goes on with an affecting description of his calamities. God had made him weary; he had filled him with wrinkles; he had torn him in his wrath; he had delivered him to the ungodly; he had come upon him when he was at ease; he had compassed him about; and he had rushed upon him like a giant (vs. 8—14). Of this he now makes complaint. He knew not why it was; he felt that he was innocent, and that his prayers had been pure (vs. 15—17). Overcome with deep emotion, he appeals to the earth, and asks that it would not cover his blood, or suffer him to go unavenged, but that it would disclose his guilt, and pray that his very blood might cry out from the ground, attesting his innocence (ver. 18). He then expresses the earnest desire that he might plead his cause before God; that as his friends scorned him, he might have the privilege of presenting his cause to One by whom he might hope to have justice done (vs. 19—21). He goes on to say that in a little time it would all be over—he would go down to the grave, where he would sleep in peace (ver. 22). In ch. xvii. he goes on in the language of complaint, especially of the conduct of his friends. There are mockers, he says, with him (ver. 2). God had hid their heart from understanding, and *they* never could be exalted (ver. 4). He was now made a by-word, but the time would come when upright men would be astonished at the course of things in regard to him; that God had afflicted him in this manner, and had suffered his friends to rail on him thus, and had not come forth for his vindication (vs. 5—8). He says that it was a great truth that the righteous should hold on his way, but that among them there was not one wise man (vs. 9, 10.) And he closes by saying, that in such a series of calamities his only hope was in the grave. There was rest. He was prepared to embrace corruption as his father, and to say to the worm that it was his mother and his sister (vs. 11—16).

THEN Job answered and said,  
2 I have heard many such <sup>1</sup> things: miserable <sup>a</sup> comforters *are* ye all.

<sup>1</sup> or, *troublesome*.

<sup>a</sup> c. 13. 4.

3 Shall <sup>2</sup> vain words have an end? or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?

<sup>2</sup> words of wind, c. 15. 2.

2. *Many such things.* That is, either things fitted to provoke and irritate, or sentiments that are common-place. There was nothing new in what they said, and nothing to the purpose. ¶ *Miserable comforters.* Comp. ch. xiii. 4. They had come professedly to console with him. Now all that they said was adapted only to irritate, and to deepen his distress. He was disappointed; and he was deeply wounded and grieved.

3. *Shall vain words.* Marg., as in Heb., *words of wind*; that is, words which were devoid of thought—light,

trifling. This is a retort on Eliphaz. He had charged Job (ch. xv. 2, 3) with uttering only such words. Such forms of expression are common in the East. "his promise, it is only wind." "Breath, breath; all breath." Roberts. ¶ *Or what emboldeneth thee.* "What provokes or irritates thee, that thou dost answer in this manner? What have I said, that has given occasion to such a speech—a speech so severe and unkind?" The Syriac reads this, "do not afflict me any more with speeches; for if you speak any more, I will not answer you."

4 I also could speak as ye do : if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake <sup>b</sup> mine head at you.

5 But I would strengthen you

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 22. 7.

4. *I also could speak as ye do.* In the same reproachful manner, and stringing together old proverbs and maxims as you have. ¶ *If your soul were in my soul's stead.* If you were in my place. The idea is, that there is no difficulty in finding arguments to overwhelm the afflicted—a truth which most persons who have been unfortunate, have had opportunity to experience. ¶ *I could heap up words against you.* Or, rather, “I could string together words against you.” The idea is not that of *heaping up*, or *accumulating*; it is that of *tying together*, or *uniting*; and refers here to stringing together old maxims, saws, and proverbs, in the form of a set argument or discourse. The idea of Job is, that their discourses were nothing but ancient proverbs, thrown together, or strung along without regard to order, pertinancy, or force. The Hebrew word used here (קָרַב) means to bind, to bind together, to associate, to be confederate. It may be applied to friends—united in friendship; to nations—united in an alliance, &c. Gesenius supposes that it means here that he “would make a league with words against them;” but the above seems to be the more probable interpretation. The LXX render it, “then I could insult you—ἐναλοῦμαι—with words.” Jerome (Vulg.) “I would console you with words, and move my head over you.” The Chaldee is as the Hebrew—קָרַב. Dr. Good renders it, “against you will I string together old sayings.” ¶ *And shake mine head at you.* An action common to all countries and ages, expressive of contempt, or of threatening. Comp. Jer. xviii. 16; Lam. ii. 15; Zeph. ii. 15; Matt. xxvii. 29. So Lucretius ii. 1163:

with my mouth,<sup>c</sup> and the moving of my lips should assuage *your grief*.

6 Though I speak, my grief is not asswaged: and *though* I forbear, what <sup>1</sup> am I eased?

<sup>c</sup> Pr. 27. 9.

<sup>1</sup> goeth from me ¶

“Jamque, caput quassans, grandis subspirat arator,  
Crebrius incassum magnum cecidisse laborem.”

In like manner Virgil, *Æn.* vii. 292:

“Tum, quassans caput, hæc effundit pectore dicta.”

So, also, Homer, *Odys.* ε:

Κινήσας δὲ κάρη πρότι ὃν μυθήσατο θυμόν.

The meaning of Job here is, that he could as easily have expressed contempt, reproach, and scorn, as they did. It required no uncommon talent to do it, and he felt that he would have been fully sufficient for the task.

5. But *I would strengthen you with my mouth.* With that which proceeds from the mouth—words. ¶ *And the moving of my lips.* My speaking—implying that it would have been done in a mild, gentle, kind manner—so that the lips would appear just to move. Others, however, have given a different interpretation. Thus Dr. Good renders it:

“With my own mouth will I overpower you,  
Till the quivering of my lips shall fail.”

But the common interpretation is to be preferred. The word rendered “*moving*” (רָדַף) is from רָדַף—to move, agitate, and hence denotes motion. It denotes here the motion of the lips when we speak. Gesenius renders it, *consolation, comfort*—because this is expressed by a motion of the head. ¶ *Should assuage your grief.* The word here used (רָדַף), means, properly, to hold back, to restrain. Job vii. 11. Here it is correctly rendered, meaning that he would hold back, or check their sorrows. In other words, he would sustain them.

6. *Though I speak, my grief is not asswaged.* “But for me, it makes now no difference whether I speak or am silent. My sufferings continue. If I attempt to vindicate myself before men,

7 But now he hath made me weary: thou hast made desolate all my company.

8 And thou hast filled me with

<sup>d</sup> wrinkles, *which* is a witness against me: and my leanness rising up in me beareth witness to my face.

<sup>d</sup> Ep. 5. 27.

I am reproached; and equally so if I am silent. If I maintain my cause before God, it avails me nothing, for my sufferings continue. If I am silent, and submit without a murmur, they are the same. Neither silence, nor argument, nor entreaty avails me before God or man. I am doomed to suffering." ¶ *What am I eased?* Marg., *Goeth from me*. Literally, "what goeth from me?" The sense is, that it all availed nothing.

7. *But now he hath made me weary*. That is, God has exhausted my strength. This verse introduces a new description of his sufferings; and he begins with a statement of the woes that God had brought on him. The first was, that he had taken away all his strength. ¶ *All my company*. The word rendered "company" (צָרָה) means, properly, an assembly that comes together by appointment, or at stated times; but here it is evidently used in the sense of the little community of which Job was the head and father. The sense is, that all his family had been destroyed.

8. *And thou hast filled me with wrinkles*. Noyes renders this, "and thou hast seized hold of me, which is a witness against me." Wemyss, "since thou hast bound me with chains, witnesses come forward." Good, "and hast cut off myself from becoming a witness." Luther, "he has made me *huntslich* (skilfully, artificially, cunningly), and bears witness against me." Jerome, "my wrinkles bear witness against me." Sept., "my lie has become a witness, and is risen up against me." From this variety of explanations, it will be seen that this passage is not of easy and obvious construction. The Hebrew word which is here used, and rendered, "thou hast filled me with wrinkles" (תִּקְרַמְנִי), from קָרַם, *qāmāt*, occurs only in one other place in the Bible. Job xxii.

16. It is there in the *Pual* form, and

rendered, "were cut down." According to Gesenius, it means, to lay fast hold of, to seize with the hands, and answers to the Arabic, *ḥāṣ*, to bind.

The word in Chaldee (קָרַם) means to wrinkle, or collect in wrinkles; and is applied to anything that is *contracted*, or rough. It is applied in the form קָרַם to the pupil of the eye as being *contracted*, as in the declaration in *Derec Erez*, c. 5, quoted by Castell. "The world is like the eye: where the ocean that surrounds the world is white the world itself is black; the pupil is Jerusalem, and the image in the pupil is the sanctuary." Probably the true notion of the word is to be found in the Arabic *ḥāṣ*. Accord-

ing to Castell, this means, to tie together the four feet of a sheep or lamb, in order that it might be slain; to bind an infant in swaddling clothes before it is laid in a cradle; to collect camels into a group or herd: and hence the *noun* is used to denote a cord or rope twisted of wool, or of leaves of the palm, or the bandages by which an infant is bound. This idea is not in use in the Hebrew; but I have no doubt that this was the original sense of the word, and that this is one of the numerous places in Job where light may be cast upon the meaning of a word from its use in Arabic. The Hebrew word may be applied to the *collecting* or *contraction* of the face in wrinkles by age, but this is not the sense here. We should express the idea by "being *drawn up* with pain or affliction; by being straitened or compressed." The meaning is that of *drawing together*—as the feet of a sheep when tied, or twisting—as a rope; and the idea here is, that Job was drawn up, compressed, bound by his afflictions—and that this was a witness against him. The word *compressed* comes as near to the sense as any one that we have.

9 He teareth <sup>c</sup> me in his wrath, who hateth me: he gnasheth

e c. 10. 16, 17.

¶ Which is a witness against me. That is, "this is an argument against my innocence. The fact that God has thus compressed, and fettered, and fastened me; that he has bound me as with a cord—as if I were tied for the slaughter, is an argument on which my friends insist, and to which they appeal, as a proof of my guilt. I cannot answer it. They refer to it constantly. It is the burden of their demonstration, and how can I reply to it?" The position of mind here is, that he could appeal to God for his uprightness, but these afflictions stood in the way of his argument for his innocence with his friends. They were the usual proofs of God's displeasure, and he could not well meet the argument which was drawn from them in his case, for in all his protestations of innocence there stood these afflictions—the usual proofs of God's displeasure against men—as evidence against him, to which they triumphantly appealed. ¶ And my leanness rising up in me. Dr. Good renders this, "my calumniator." Wemyss, "false witnesses." So Jerome, "falsiloquus." The LXX render it, "my lie—*τὸ ψεύδος μου*—rises up against me." The Hebrew word (*שָׁרָר*) means, properly, a lie, deceit, hypocrisy. But it cannot be supposed that Job would formally admit that he was a liar and a hypocrite. This would have been to concede the whole point in dispute. The word, therefore, it would seem, must have some other sense. The verb *שָׁרָר* is used to denote not only to lie, but also to waste away, to fail. Ps. cix. 24, "My flesh faileth of fatness." The idea seems to have been, that a person whose flesh had wasted away by sickness, as it were, belied himself; or it was a false testimony about himself; it did not give a fair representation of him. That could be obtained only when he was in sound health. Thus in Hab. iii. 17, "The labor of the olive shall fail." Heb., shall lie or de-

upon me with his teeth; mine enemy <sup>f</sup> sharpeneth his eyes upon me.

f c. 13. 24.

ceive; that is, it shall belie itself, or shall not do justice to itself; it shall afford no fair representation of what the olive is fitted to produce. So the word is used in Hos. ix. 2. It is used here in this sense, as denoting the false appearance of Job—his present aspect—which was no proper representation of himself; that is, his emaciated and ulcerated form. This, he says, was a "witness" against him. It was one of the proofs to which they appealed, and he did not know how to answer it. It was usually an evidence of divine displeasure, and he now solemnly and tenderly addresses God, and says, that he had furnished this testimony against him—and he was overwhelmed.

9. He teareth me in his wrath. The language here is all taken from the ferocity of wild beasts; and the idea is, that his enemy had come upon him as a lion seizes upon its prey. Rosenmüller, Reiske, and some others suppose that this refers to God. Cocceius refers it to Satan. Schultens, Dr. Good, and some others, to Eliphaz, as the leading man among his adversaries. I have no doubt that this is the true reference. The connexion seems to demand this; and we ought not to suppose that Job would charge this upon God, unless there is the clearest evidence. The whole passage is a description of the manner in which Job supposed his friends had come upon him. He says they had attacked him like wild beasts. Yet it must be admitted that he sometimes attributes these feelings to God, and says that he came upon him like a roaring lion. See ch. x. 16, 17. ¶ Who hateth me. Or rather, "and persecutes me, or is become my adversary," for so the word here used (*שָׂטָן*) means. See Notes on ch. xxx. 21. ¶ He gnasheth upon me with his teeth. As an enraged wild animal does when about to seize upon its prey. A similar figure occurs in Otway, in his "Orphan:"

10 They have gaped upon me with their mouth; they have smitten <sup>g</sup> me upon the cheek reproachfully; they have <sup>h</sup> gathered themselves together against me.

11 God <sup>i</sup> hath <sup>l</sup> delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked.

12 I was at ease, but he hath

<sup>g</sup> La. 3. 30.  
<sup>h</sup> Ps. 35. 15. <sup>i</sup> c. 1. 15, 17. <sup>l</sup> shut me up.

"— for my Castalio's false;  
False as the wind, the water, or the weather;  
Cruel as tigers o'er their trembling prey:  
I feel him in my breast, he tears my heart,  
And at each sigh he drinks the gushing blood."

And so Homer, when he describes the wrath of Achilles as he armed himself to avenge the death of Patroclus, mentions among other signs of wrath his gnashing his teeth:

Τοῦ καὶ ὀδόντων μὲν καναχὴ πέλε.  
IL. xix. 365.

So Virgil describes his hero as

"Furens animis," "dentibus infrendens."  
ÆN. viii. 228, 230.

¶ *Mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me.* Looks fiercely; watches me narrowly—as an animal does his victim when about to seize upon it. The image is probably drawn from the intense gaze of the lion when about to pounce upon his prey. "He darts piercing looks at me; or looks at me with a fierce and penetrating eye."

10. *They have gaped upon me.* Changing the form from the singular to the plural, and including *all* his pretended friends. Such a change in the number is not uncommon. His mind seems to have passed from the particular instance which he was contemplating, to *all* his friends, and he suddenly felt that *all* had treated him alike. The meaning is, that, like wild beasts, they open their mouth to devour me. ¶ *They have gathered themselves together.* They have entered into a conspiracy, and have agreed to oppose me. They are united in this thing, and all feel and act alike.

11. *God hath delivered me.* Marg., *shut me up.* The meaning is, that God

broken me asunder: he hath also taken *me* by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me <sup>k</sup> up for his mark.

13 His archers compass me round about, he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground.

\* c. 7. 20.

had committed him to their hands as a prisoner or captive. They had power over him to do as they pleased. ¶ *To the ungodly.* Into the hands of wicked men—meaning undoubtedly his professed friends. ¶ *And turned me over.* The word here used (from *וָרַח*), means, to throw headlong, to precipitate, to cast down. Here it means, "he has thrown me headlong into the hands of the wicked."

12. *I was at ease.* I was in a state of happiness and security. The word here used (*שָׁלוֹם*) means sometimes to be at ease in an improper sense; that is, to be in a state of "carnal security," or living unconcerned in sin (Ezek. xxiii. 42, comp. Prov. i. 32); but here it is used in the sense of comfort. He had everything desirable around him. ¶ *But he hath broken me asunder.* He has crushed me. ¶ *He hath also taken me by my neck.* Perhaps as an animal does his prey. We have all seen dogs seize upon their prey in this manner. ¶ *And set me up for his mark.* Changing the figure, and saying that God had directed his arrows against him. So Jeremiah, Lam. iii. 12:

He hath bent his bow,  
And set me as a mark for the arrow.

13. *His archers.* He does not come alone to shoot at me; he has employed a company of bowmen, who also direct their arrows against me. The word here used (*רַח*) means, properly, *much*, *large*, *great*; and is applied to that which is powerful or mighty. It is nowhere else used in the sense of *archers*, and might be rendered "*his many*;" i.e., his bands, hosts, or armies. But a. r.

14 He breaketh me with breach upon breach, <sup>1</sup> he runneth upon me like a giant.

1 Ps. 42. 7.

the ancient versions render it *arrows*, or *archers*, probably that sense is to be retained. Allusion is here made to those who claimed to be the friends of Job, but who now showed to his apprehension that they were merely sharpshooters under the control of God, to deepen his woes. ¶ *He cleaveth my reins asunder.* With his arrows. They penetrate quite through me. ¶ *He poureth out my gall.* The word *gall* means the *bile*—the yellowish-green bitter fluid secreted in the liver. A similar figure occurs in Lam. ii. 11, "My liver is poured upon the earth." Among the heathen poets, also, the *liver* is represented as pierced, and as pouring out gore. Thus Æsch. Agam. 442: *Σιγγάνει πρὸς ἥπαρ.* So also 801: *Δῆγμα λύπης ἐφ' ἥπαρ προσικνέται.* So in the Iliad, xiii. 412, xx. 469, 470. The meaning here is, "I am transfixed with a deadly wound, and must die. God has come upon me as an armed man, and has pierced my vitals."

14. *He breaketh me.* He crushes me. ¶ *With breach upon breach.* He renews and repeats the attack, and thus completely overwhelms me. One blow follows another in such quick succession, that he does not give me time to recover. ¶ *He runneth upon me like a giant.* With great and irresistible force—as some strong and mighty warrior whom his adversary cannot resist. The Hebrew is גִּבּוֹר—a *mighty one*. Sept., "The mighty—δυνάμενοι—run upon me," Vulg., *gigas*—a giant.

15. *I have sewed sackcloth.* I have put on the badges of humiliation and grief. See Notes on Isa. iii. 24. This was the usual emblem of mourning. In order more deeply to express it, or to make it a *permanent* memorial of sorrow, it would seem that it was *sewed* around the body—as we *sew* crape on the hat. ¶ *And defiled my horn in the dust.* The word rendered *defiled* (from חָלָל) has, according to Gesenius, the

15 I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin, and defiled my horn in the <sup>m</sup> dust.

m c. 30. 19.

notion of *repetition*, derived from the use of the Arabic word. The Arabic means, to drink again, *i. e.*, after a former draught; and then, to drink deep. Hence the word is applied to any action which is repeated—as to the second blow by which one already struck down is killed; to an after harvest; or to gleanings in the fields. Here Gesenius supposes it means to *maltreat*, to *abuse*; and the idea, according to him, is, that he had covered his whole head in the dust. The word *horn* is used in the Scriptures to denote strength and power. The figure is taken from horned animals, whose strength resides in their horns; and hence, as the horn is the means of defence, the word comes to denote that on which one relies; his strength, honor, dignity. A *horn*, made of silver, was also worn as an ornament, or as an emblem, on the forehead of females or warriors. It was probably used at first by warriors as a symbol of *power, authority, or strength*; and the idea was undoubtedly derived from the fact that the strength of animals was seen to lie in the horn. Then it came to be a mere ornament, and as such is used still in the vicinity of Mount Lebanon. Oriental customs do not undergo those changes which are so common in the Western world, and it is possible that this custom prevailed in the time of Job. The *horn* was usually worn by females, but in the engraving which I annex, it is also a part of the ornament on the head of a male, and as such would be regarded doubtless as an emblem of honor. The custom is prevalent at the present day among the Druses of Lebanon, the Egyptian cavalry, and in some parts of Russia bordering on Persia. Dr. Mac-michael, in his "Journey," says: "One of the most extraordinary parts of the attire of their females (Druses of Lebanon) is a silver horn, sometimes studded with jewels, worn on the head in various positions, distinguishing their

16 My face is foul with weeping, and on my eyelids is the shadow of death;

*different conditions.* A married woman has it affixed to the right side of the head, a widow on the left, and a virgin is pointed out by its being placed on the very crown. Over this silver projection the long veil is thrown, with which they so completely conceal their faces as to rarely have more than an eye visible." The horn worn by females is a conical tube, about twelve inches long. Col. Light mentions the horn of the wife of an emir, made of gold, and studded with precious stones. The two male figures in the engraving represent Abyssinian chiefs with horns. They are worn by them in military

reviews, or on parade after a victory. They are much shorter than those of the females, and are about the size and shape of a candle-extinguisher, fastened by a strong fillet to the head, which is often made of metal: they are not easily broken off. - This peculiar kind of horn is undoubtedly the kind made by the false prophet Zedekiah for Ahab, to whom he said, when Ahab was about to attack the enemy, "With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou hast conquered them." 1 Kings xxii. 11; 2 Chron. xviii. 10. Comp. Deut xxxiii. 17. The following engraving illustrates its usual appearance.



The idea here is, that whatever once constituted the reliance or the glory of Job, was now completely prostrate. It was as if it were buried in the earth.

16. *My face is foul with weeping.* Wemyss, "swelled." Noyes, "red." Good, "tarnished." Luther, "ist geschwollen"—is swelled. So Jerome. The LXX, strangely enough, ἡ γαστήρ

μου συγκέκλυται, κ.τ.λ., "my belly is burned with weeping." The Hebrew word (רָחַץ) means to boil up, to ferment, to foam. Hence it means to be red, and the word is often used in this sense in Arabic—from the idea of becoming heated or inflamed. Here it probably means either to be *swelled*, as anything does that *ferments*, or to be



17 Not <sup>n</sup> for *any* injustice in mine hands: also my prayer <sup>o</sup> is pure.

18 O earth, cover not thou my

■ Ps. 44. 17—21.    o Ps. 66. 18, 19.

*red* as if *heated*—the usual effect of weeping. The idea of being *defiled* is not in the word. ¶ *And on my eyelids is the shadow of death.* On the meaning of the word rendered “shadow of death” see Notes on ch. iii. 5. The meaning is, that darkness covered his eyes, and he felt that he was about to die. One of the usual indications of the approach of death is, that the sight fails, and everything seems to be dark. Hence Homer so often describes death by the phrase, “and darkness covered his eyes;” or the form, “a cloud of death covered his eyes”—*θανάτου νέφος ὅσσε ἐκάλυψε*. The idea here is, that he experienced the indications of approaching death.

17. *Not for any injustice, &c.* Still claiming that he does not deserve his sorrows, and that these calamities had not come upon him on account of any enormous sins, as his friends believed. ¶ *My prayer is pure.* My devotion; my worship of God is not hypocritical—as my friends maintain.

18. *O earth.* Passionate appeals to the earth are not uncommon in the Scriptures. See Notes on Isa. i. 2. Such appeals indicate deep emotion, and are among the most animated forms of personification. ¶ *Cover not thou my blood.* Blood here seems to denote the wrong done to him. He compares his situation with that of one who had been murdered, and calls on the earth not to conceal the crime, and prays that his injuries may not be hidden, or pass unavenged. Aben Ezra, Dr. Good, and some others, however, suppose that he refers to blood shed *by* him, and that the idea is, that he would have the earth reveal any blood if he had ever shed any; or, in other words, that it is a strong protestation of his innocence. But the former interpretation seems to accord best with the connection. It is the exclamation of deep

blood, and let my cry have no place.

19 Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is <sup>1</sup> on high.

<sup>1</sup> in the high places. Ep. 1 3.

feeling. He speaks as a man about to die, but he says that he would die as an innocent and a much injured man, and he passionately prays that his death may not pass unavenged. God had crushed him, and his friends had wronged him, and he now earnestly implores that his character may yet be vindicated. “According to the saying of the Arabs, the blood of one who was unjustly slain remained upon the earth without sinking into it until the avenger of blood came up. It was regarded as a proof of innocence.” Eichhorn, *in loc.* That there is much of irreverence in all this must, I think, be conceded. It is not language for us to imitate. But it is not more irreverent and unbecoming than what often occurs, and it is designed to show what the human heart *will* express when it is allowed to give utterance to its real feelings. ¶ *And let my cry have no place.* Let it not be hid or concealed. Let there be nothing to hinder my cry from ascending to heaven. The meaning is, that Job wished his solemn protestations of his innocence to go abroad. He desired that all might hear him. He called on the nations and heaven to hear. He appealed to the universe. He desired that the earth would not conceal the proof of his wrongs, and that his cry might not be confined or limited by any bounds, but that it might go abroad, so that all worlds might hear.

19. *My witness is in heaven.* That is, I can appeal to God for my sincerity. He is my witness; and he will bear record for me. This is an evidence of returning confidence in God—to which Job always returns even after the most passionate and irreverent expressions. Such is his real trust in God, that though he is betrayed at times into expressions of impatience and irreverence, yet he is sure to return to calmer views, and to show that he has true

20 My friends<sup>1</sup> scorn me: but mine eye poureth out tears unto God.

21 O<sup>P</sup> that one might plead for a man with God, as a man

<sup>1</sup> are my scorers. p Ro. 9. 20.

confidence in the Most High. The strength, the power, and the point of his expressions of passion and impatience are against his friends; but they sometimes terminate on God, as if even he was leagued with them against him. But he still had permanent or abiding confidence in God. ¶ *My record is on high.* Marg., in the high places. It means, in heaven. Luther renders this, Und er mich kennet, ist in der Höhe—and he who knows me is on high. The Hebrew is *עֵדִי*, my witness; properly, an eye-witness. The meaning is, that he could appeal to God as a witness of his sincerity.

20. *My friends scorn me.* Marg., are my scorers. That is, his friends had him in derision and mocked him, and he could only appeal with tears to God. ¶ *Mine eye poureth out tears unto God.* Despised and mocked by his friends, he made his appeal to one who he knew would regard him with compassion. This shows that the heart of Job was substantially right. Notwithstanding all his passionate exclamations; and notwithstanding his expressions, when he was urged on by his sorrows to give vent to improper emotions in relation to God; yet he had a firm confidence in him, and always returned to right feelings and views. The heart may sometimes err. The best of men may sometimes give expression to improper feelings. But they will return to just views, and will ultimately evince unwavering confidence in God.

21. *O that one might plead for a man.* A more correct rendering of this would be, "Oh that it might be for a man to contend with God;" that is, in a judicial controversy. It is the expression of an earnest desire to carry his cause at once before God, and to be permitted to argue

*pleadeth* for his<sup>2</sup> neighbor!

22 When<sup>3</sup> a few years are come, then I shall go<sup>4</sup> the way whence I shall not return.

<sup>2</sup> or, friend.  
<sup>3</sup> years of number. q Ec. 12. 5.

it there. This desire Job had often expressed. See Notes on ch. xiii. 3, 18—22. On the grammatical construction of the passage, see Rosenmüller. ¶ *As a man pleadeth for his neighbor!* Heb., "the son of man;" that is, the offspring of man. Or, rather, as a man contendeth with his neighbor; as one man may carry on a cause with another. He desired to carry his cause directly before God, and to be permitted to argue the case with him, as one is permitted to maintain an argument with a man. See Notes on ch. xiii. 20, 21.

22. *When a few years are come.* Marg., years of number; that is, numbered years, or a few years. The same idea is expressed in ch. vii. 21. See Notes on that place. The idea is, that he must soon die. He desired, therefore, before he went down to the grave, to carry his cause before God, and to have, as he did not doubt he should have, the divine attestation in his favor. Comp. Notes on ch. xix. 25—27. Now he was overwhelmed with calamities and reproaches, and was about to die in this condition. He did not wish to die thus. He wished that the reproaches might be wiped off, and that his character might be cleared up and made fair. He believed assuredly that if he could be permitted to carry his cause directly before God, he might be able to vindicate his character, and to obtain the divine verdict in his favor; and if he obtained that, he was not unwilling to die. It is the expression of such a wish as every man has, that his sun may not go down under a cloud; that whatever aspersions may rest on his character may be wiped away; and that his name, if remembered at all when he is dead, may go untarnished down to future times, and be such that his friends may repeat it without a blush.

## CHAPTER XVII.

**M**Y <sup>1</sup> breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves <sup>a</sup> are ready for me.

2 Are there not mockers with

<sup>1</sup> or, spirit is spent.      a Ps. 88. 3, 4.

me? and doth not mine eye <sup>a</sup> continue in their provocation?

3 Lay down now, put me in a surety with thee; who is he *that* will strike hands <sup>b</sup> with me?

<sup>2</sup> lodge.      b Pr. 6. 1.

1. *My breath is corrupt.* Marg., or, *spirit is spent.* The idea is, that his vital powers were nearly extinct; his breath failed; his power was weakened, and he was ready to die. This is connected with the previous chapter, and should not have been separated from it. There was no necessity of making a new chapter here, and we have one of those unfortunate breaks in the middle of a paragraph, and almost of a sentence, which are too common in the Scriptures. ¶ *The graves are ready for me.* The Hebrew is plural, but why so used I know not. The Vulgate is singular—*sepulchrum*. The LXX render it, “I pray for a tomb (sing., *ταφῆς*), but I cannot obtain it.” Possibly the meaning is, “I am about to be united to the graves, or to tombs.” Schultens remarks that the plural form is common in Arabic poetry, as well as in poetry in general.

2. *And doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?* Marg., *lodge.* This is the meaning of the Hebrew word here used, *לָלַךְ*. It properly denotes to pass the night, or to lodge in a place, as distinguished from a permanent residence. The idea here seems to be, that his eye rested on their provocations. It remained fixed on them. It was not a mere glance, a passing notice, but was such a view as resulted from a careful observation. It was not such a view as a traveller would obtain by passing hastily by, but it was such as one would obtain who had encamped for a time, and had an opportunity of looking around him with care, and seeing things as they were. Thus explained, there is much poetic beauty in the passage. The

Vulgate, however, renders it, “I have not sinned, and mine eye remains in bitterness.” The LXX, “I supplicate in distress—*καμνων*—yet what have I done? Strangers came, and stole my substance: who is the man?” The simple meaning is, that Job had a calm view of their wickedness, and that he could not be deceived.

3. *Lay down now.* This is evidently an address to God—a repetition of the wish which he had so often expressed, that he might be permitted to bring his cause directly before him. See ch. xiii. 3. The whole passage here is obscure, because we are in a great measure ignorant of the ancient practices in courts of law, and of the ancient forms of trial. The general sense seems to be, that Job desires the Deity to enter into a judicial investigation, and to give him a *pledge*—or, as we should say, a *bond* or *security*—that he would not avail himself of his almighty power, but would place him on an equality in the trial, and allow him to plead his cause on equal terms. See Notes on ch. xiii. 20–22. The phrase “lay down now” means, lay down a pledge, or something of that kind; and may have referred to some ancient custom of giving security on going to trial, that no advantage would be taken, or that the parties would abide by the decision in the case. ¶ *Put me in a surety with thee.* The word used here

is from *מָצַו*, to mix, mingle; to exchange, to barter; and then to become surety for any one—that is, to *exchange* places with him, or to stand in his place. Gen. xliii. 9, xliv. 32. Here the idea seems to be, that Job wished the Deity to give him some pledge or security

4 For thou hast hid their heart from understanding : therefore shalt thou not exalt *them*.

that justice would be done, or that he would not take advantage of his power and majesty to overawe him. Or, as has been remarked, it may refer to some custom of furnishing security on a voluntary trial or arbitration, that the award of the referees would be observed. I think it most probable that this is the idea. The controversy here was to be voluntary. In a voluntary trial, or an arbitration, there is a necessity of some security by the parties that the decision shall be submitted to—a pledge to each other that they will abide by it. Such a pledge Job desired in this case. All this is language taken from courts, and should not be pressed too much, nor should Job be hastily charged with irreverence. Having once suggested the idea of a *trial* of the cause, it was natural for him to use the language which was commonly employed in reference to such trials; and these expressions are to be regarded as thrown in for the sake of *keeping*, or verisimilitude. ¶ *Who is he that will strike hands with me?* Striking hands then, as now, seems to have been one mode of confirming an agreement, or ratifying a compact. The idea here is, “Who is there that will be surety to me for thee?” that is, for the faithful observance of right and justice. There is an appearance of irreverence in this language, but it arises from carrying out the ideas pertaining to a form of trial in a court. In entering into *sureties*, it was usual to unite hands. See Prov. vi. 1 :

My son, if thou be surety for thy friend,  
If thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger.

So ch. xvii. 18 :

A man void of understanding striketh hands,  
And becometh surety in the presence of his friend.

Comp. Prov. xi. 15, xxii. 26. The same custom prevailed in the times of Homer and of Virgil. Thus Homer (*Iliad*, β. 341) says :

Πού δὴ  
δεξίαι ἦν ἐπέπαιμεν—

5 He that speaketh flattery <sup>c</sup> to his friends, even the eyes of his children shall fail.

c Ps. 12. 3.

And so Virgil (*Æneid*, iv. 597) says :  
“ — en dextra fidesque.”

4. *For thou hast hid their heart from understanding.* That is, the heart of his professed friends. Job says that they were blind and perverse, and indisposed to render him justice ; and he therefore pleads that he may carry his cause directly before God. He attributes their want of understanding to the agency of God, in accordance with the doctrine which prevailed in early times, and which is so often expressed in the Scriptures, that God is the source of light and truth, and that when men are blinded, it is in accordance with his wise purposes. See Isa. vi. 9, 10. It is *because* they were thus blind and perverse, that he asks the privilege of carrying the cause at once up to God—and who could blame him for such a desire? ¶ *Therefore shalt thou not exalt them.* By the honor of deciding a case like this, or by the reputation of wisdom. The name of sage or wise man was among the most valued in those times; but Job says that that would not be awarded to his friends. God would not exalt or honor men thus devoid of wisdom.

5. *He that speaketh flattery to his friends.* Noyes renders this, “He that delivers up his friend as a prey, the eyes of his children shall fail.” So Wemys: “He who delivers up his friends to plunder.” Dr. Good, “He that rebuketh his friends with mildness, even the eyes of his children shall be accomplished.” The LXX, “He announces evil for his portion; his eyes fail over his sons.” The Vulg., “He promises spoil to his companions, and the eyes of his sons fail.” The word rendered “flattery” (פִּינָה) properly means, *that which is smooth, smoothness* (from פָּיַן, to be smooth); and *therefore* it denotes a *lot* or *portion*, because a smooth stone was anciently used to cast lots in dividing spoils. Deut. xviii. 9. Here it is

6 He hath made me also a byword of the people; and <sup>1</sup> aforetime I was as a tabret.

<sup>1</sup> or, *before them.*

synonymous with plunder or spoil; and the idea is, that he who betrayeth his friends to the spoil or to the spoiler, the eyes of his children shall fail. The meaning in this connexion is, that the friends of Job had acted as one would who should announce the residence of his neighbors to robbers that they might come and plunder them. Instead of defending him, they had acted the part of a traitor. Schultens says that this verse is "a Gordian knot;" and most commentators regard it as such; but the above seems to give a clear and consistent meaning. It is evidently a proverb, and is designed to bear on the professed friends of Job, and to show that they had acted a fraudulent part towards him. In ver. 4, he had said that God had hid their heart from understanding, and that wisdom had failed them. He *here* says, that in addition to a want of wisdom, they were like a man who should betray his neighbors to robbers. ¶ *Even the eyes of his children shall fail.* He shall be punished. To do this is a crime, and great calamity shall come upon him, represented by the failure of the eyes of his children. Calamity is not unfrequently expressed by the loss of the eyes. See Prov. xxx. 17.

6. *He hath made me.* That is, God has done this. ¶ *Also a byword.* A proverb (שׁוֹרֵק); a term of reproach, ridicule, or scorn. He has exposed me to derision. ¶ *And aforetime.* Marg., *before them.* The margin is the correct translation of the Hebrew, מִלְּפָנֶיךָ. It means, in their presence, or in their view. ¶ *I was as a tabret.* This is an unhappy translation. The true meaning is, "I am become their abhorrence, or am to them an object of contempt." Vulg., "I am an example (*exemplum*) to them." Sept., "I am become a laughter (γέλως) to them." The Chaldee renders it, "Thou hast placed me for a proverb to

7 Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow, and all my <sup>2</sup> members are as a shadow.

<sup>2</sup> or, *thoughts.*

the people, and I shall be *Gehenna* (גֵּהֶנְנָא) to them." The Hebrew word תֹּפֶת, *thopheth*, or *Tophet*, is the name which is often given in the Scriptures to the valley of Hinnom—the place where children were sacrificed to Moloch. See Notes on Matt. v. 22. But there is no evidence or probability that the word was so used in the time of Job. It is never used in the Scriptures in the sense of a *tabret*, that is, a tabor or small drum; though the word תֹּפ, *toph*, is thus used. See Notes on Isa. v. 12. The word here used is derived, probably, from the obsolete verb תִּפֵּחַ, *to spit out*; and then to spit out with contempt. The verb is so used in Chaldee. *Castell.* The meaning of the word probably still lives in the Arabic. The Arabic word تَفَف means, to spit out with contempt; and the various forms of the nouns derived from the verb are applied to anything detested, or detestable; to the parings of the nails; to an abandoned woman; to a dog, &c. See *Castell* on this word. I have no doubt that is the sense here, and that we have here a word whose true signification is to be sought in the Arabic; and that Job means to say that he was treated as the most loathsome and execrable object.

7. *Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow.* Schultens supposes that this refers to his external appearance in general, as being worn down, exhausted, *defaced* by his many troubles; but it seems rather to mean that his eyes failed on account of weeping. ¶ *And all my members are as a shadow.* "I am a mere skeleton; I am exhausted and emaciated by my sufferings." It is common to speak of persons who are emaciated by sickness or famine as mere *shadows*. Thus Livy (L. xxi. 40) says, *Effigies, imo, umbræ hominum*; fame, frigore, illuvie, squalore enecti, contusi,

8 Upright *men* shall be astonished at this, and the innocent shall stir up himself against the hypocrite.

9 The righteous <sup>d</sup> also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean <sup>e</sup> hands shall be stronger and <sup>1</sup> stronger.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. 84. 7, 11. Pr. 14. 16.  
<sup>e</sup> Ps. 24. 4. <sup>1</sup> add *strength*.

debilitati inter saxa rupesque. So Æschylus calls Œdipus—Οἰδῖπου σκιάν—the shadow of Œdipus.

8. Upright men shall be astonished at this. At the course of events in regard to me. They will be amazed that God has suffered a holy man to be plunged into such calamities, and to be treated in this manner by his friends. The fact at which he supposes they would be so much astonished was, that the good were afflicted in this manner, and that no relief was furnished. ¶ *And the innocent shall stir up himself.* Shall rouse himself, or assume vigor to resist the wicked. ¶ *The hypocrite.* The wicked—alluding probably to his professed friends. The idea of *hypocrisy* which the sentence conveys, arises from the fact, that they professed to be *his* friends, and had proved to be false; and that they had professed to be the friends of *God*, and yet had uttered sentiments inconsistent with any right views of him. He now says, that that could not go unnoticed. The world would be aroused at so remarkable a state of things, and a just public indignation would be the result.

9. *The righteous also shall hold on his way.* The meaning of this verse is plain; but the connexion is not so apparent. It seems to me that it refers to *Job himself*, and is a declaration that *he*, a righteous man, who had been so grievously calumniated, would hold on his way, and become stronger and stronger, while *they* would sink in the public esteem, and be compelled to abandon their position. It is the expression of a confident assurance that *he* would be more and more confirmed in his integrity, and would become stronger and stronger in God. Though Job intended, probably, that this should be applied to himself, yet he has expressed it in a general manner, and indeed the whole passage has a proverbial cast;

and it shows that even then it was the settled belief that the righteous would persevere. As an expression of the early faith of the pious in one of the now settled doctrines of Christianity, "the perseverance of the saint," this doctrine is invaluable. It shows that that doctrine has travelled down from the earliest ages. It was one of the elementary doctrines of religion in the earliest times. It became a proverb, and was admitted among the undisputed maxims of the wise and good, and it was such a sentiment as was just adapted to the circumstances of Job—a much tried and persecuted man. He was in all the danger of apostasy to which the pious are usually exposed; he was tempted to forsake his confidence in God; he was afflicted for reasons which he could not comprehend; he was without an earthly friend to sustain him, and he seemed to be forsaken by God himself; yet he had the fullest conviction that he would be enabled to persevere. The great principle was settled, that if there was true religion in the heart, it would abide; that if the path of righteousness had been entered, he who trod it would keep on his way. ¶ *And he that hath clean hands.* The innocent; the friend of God; the man of pure life. See Notes, ch. ix. 30. Comp. Ps. xxiv. 4. "Clean hands," here, are designed to denote a pure and holy life. Among the ancients they were regarded as indicative of purity of heart. Porphyry remarks (de antro Nympharum) that in the "mysteries," those who were initiated were accustomed to wash their hands with honey instead of water, as a pledge that they would preserve themselves from every impure and unholy thing. See Burder, in Rosenmüller's *Alte u. neue Morgenland*, in loc. ¶ *Shall be stronger and stronger.* Marg., as in Heb., add *strength*. He shall advance

10 But as for you all, do ye return, and come now: for I cannot find *one wise man* among you.

in the strength of his attachment to God. This is true. The man of pure and blameless life shall become more and more established in virtue; more confirmed in his principles; more convinced of the value and the truth of religion. Piety, like everything else, becomes stronger by exercise. The man who speaks truth only, becomes more and more attached to truth; the principle of benevolence is strengthened by being practised; honesty, the more it is exhibited, becomes more the settled rule of the life; and he who prays, delights more and more in his approaches to God. The *tendency* of religion in the heart is to grow stronger and stronger; and God *intends* that he who has once loved him, shall continue to love him for ever.

10. *But as for you all, do ye return.* This may mean, either, "return to the debate;" or, "return from your unjust and uncharitable opinion concerning me." The former seems to accord best with the scope of the passage. Tindal renders it, "Get you hence." Dr. Good, "Get ye hence, and begone, I pray." Wemyss, "Repeat your discourses as often as you may, I do not find a wise man among you." It is doubtful, however, whether the Hebrew will bear this construction. ¶ *For I cannot find one wise man among you.* Perhaps the idea here is, "I have not yet found one wise man among you, and you are invited, therefore, to renew the argument. Hitherto you have said nothing that indicates wisdom. Try again, and see if you can say anything now that shall deserve attention." If this is the meaning, it shows that Job was willing to hear all that they had to say, and to give them credit for wisdom, if they ever evinced any.

11. *My days are past.* "I am about to die." Job relapses again into sadness—as he often does. A sense of his miserable condition comes over him like a cloud, and he feels that he must die.

11 My days are past, my purposes<sup>1</sup> are broken off, *even* the<sup>1</sup> thoughts of my heart.

f Pr. 16. 9. 19. 21.

<sup>1</sup>possessions.

¶ *My purposes are broken off.* All my plans fail, and my schemes of life come to an end. No matter what they could say now, it was all over with him, and he must die. Comp. Isa. xxxviii. 12:

My habitation is taken away, and is removed from me like a shepherd's tent;  
My life is cut off as by a weaver  
Who severeth the web from the loom;  
Between the morning and the night thou wilt make an end of me.

¶ *Even the thoughts of my heart.* Marg., *possessions.* Noyes, "*treasures.*" Dr. Good, "*resolves.*" Dr. Stock, "*the tenants of my heart.*" Vulg., "*torquentes cor meum.*" Sept., τὰ ἀρθρα τῆς καρδίας μου—the strings of my heart. The Hebrew word (מַחֲשָׁבִים) means, properly,

possession (from יָרַשׁ, to inherit); and the word here means the dear possessions of his heart; his cherished plans and schemes; the delights of his soul—the purposes which he had hoped to accomplish. All these were now to be broken off by death. This is to man one of the most trying things in death. All his plans must be arrested. His projects of ambition and gain, of pleasure and of fame, of professional eminence and of learning, all are arrested midway. The farmer is compelled to leave his plough in the furrow; the mechanic, his work unfinished; the lawyer, his brief, half prepared; the student, his books lying open; the man who is building a palace, leaves it incomplete; and he who is seeking a crown, is taken away when it seemed just within his grasp. How many unfinished plans are caused by death every day! How many unfinished books, sermons, houses does it make! How many schemes of wickedness and of benevolence, of fraud and of kindness, of gain and of mercy, are daily broken in upon by death! Soon, reader, all your plans and mine will be ended—mine, perhaps, before these lines meet your eye; yours soon afterwards. God grant that our purposes of life may be

12 They change the night into day: the light is <sup>1</sup> short because of darkness.

13 If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in

<sup>1</sup> near.

such that we shall be *willing* to have them broken in upon—all so subordinate to the GREAT PLAN of being prepared for heaven, that we may cheerfully surrender them at any moment, at the call of the Master summoning us into his awful presence!

12. *They change.* The word “they” in this place some understand as referring to his friends; others, to his thoughts. Rosenmüller supposes it is to be taken *impersonally*, and that the meaning is, “night is become day to me.” Wemyss translates it, “night is assigned me for day.” So Dr. Good renders it. The meaning may be, that the night was to him as the day. He had no rest. The period when he had formerly sought repose, was now made like the day, and all was alike gloom and sadness. ¶ *The light is short because of darkness.* Marg., *near.* The meaning is, probably, “even the day has lost its usual brilliancy and cheerfulness, and has become gloomy and sad. It seems to be like night. Neither night nor day are natural to me; the one is restless and full of cares like the usual employments of day, and the other is gloomy or almost night, where there is no comfort and peace. Day brings to me none of its usual enjoyments. It is short, gloomy, sad, and hastens away, and a distressing and restless night soon comes on.”

13. *If I wait.* Or more accurately, “truly I expect that the grave will be my home.” The word rendered “if” (אם) is often used in such a sense. The meaning is, “I look certainly to the grave as my home. I have made up my mind to it, and have no other expectation.” ¶ *The grave.* Heb. קבר. It may mean here either the grave, or the region of departed spirits, to which he expected soon to descend. ¶ *Mine house.* My home; my perma-

nent abode.

14 I have <sup>2</sup> said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister.

<sup>2</sup> cried, or, called.

¶ *I have made my bed.* I am certain of making my bed there. I shall soon lie down there. ¶ *In the darkness.* In the grave, or in the dark world to which it leads. See Notes on ch. x. 21, 22.

14. *I have said.* Marg., *Cried, or called.* The sense is, “I say,” or “I thus address the grave.” ¶ *To corruption.* The word here used (תולד) means, properly, a *pit*, or *pit-fall*, Ps. vii. 16, ix. 16; a *cistern*, or a *ditch*, Job ix. 31; or *the sepulchre*, or *grave*, Ps. xxx. 10; Job xxxiii. 18, 30. The LXX render it here by θάνατον—*death*. Jerome (Vulg.), *putredini dixi*. According to Gesenius (*Lex.*), the word never has the sense of *corruption*. Schultens, however, Rosenmüller, and others understand it in the sense of *corruption* or *putrefaction*. This accords, certainly, with the other hemistich, and better constitutes a parallelism with the “worm” than the word “grave” would. It seems probable that this is the sense here; and if the proper meaning of the word is a *pit*, or *the grave*, it here denotes the grave, as containing a dead and mouldering body. ¶ *Thou art my father.* “I am nearly allied to it. I sustain to it a relation like that of a child to a father.” The idea seems to be that of *family likeness*; and the object is to present the most striking and impressive view of his sad and sorrowful condition. He was so diseased, so wretched, so full of sores and of corruption (see ch. vii. 5), that he might be said to be the child of one mouldering in the grave, and was kindred to a family in the tomb! ¶ *To the worm.* The worm that feeds upon the dead. He belonged to that sad family where the body was putrifying, and where it was covered with worms. See Notes on Isa. xiv. 11. ¶ *My mother.* I am so nearly allied to the worms, that the



15 And where is now my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it?

connexion may be compared to that between a mother and her son. ¶ *And my sister.* "The sister here is mentioned rather than the brother, because the noun rendered *worm* in the Hebrew is in the feminine gender." *Rosenmüller.* The sense of the whole is, that Job felt that he belonged to the grave. He was destined to corruption. He was soon to lie down with the dead. His acquaintance and kindred were there. So corrupt was his body, so afflicted and diseased, that he seemed to belong to the family of the putrifying, and of those covered with worms! What an impressive description; and yet how true is it of all! The most vigorous frame, the most beautiful and graceful form, the most brilliant complexion, has a near relationship to the worm, and will soon belong to the mouldering family beneath the ground! Christian reader! such are you; such am I. Well, let it be so. Let us not repine. Be the grave our home; be the mouldering people there our parents, and brothers, and sisters. Be our alliance with the worms. There is a brighter scene beyond—a world where we shall be kindred with the angels, and ranked among the sons of God. In that world we shall be clothed with immortal youth, and shall know corruption no more. Then our eyes will shine with undiminished brilliancy for ever; our cheeks glow with immortal health; our hearts beat with the pulsations of eternal life. Then our hands shall be feeble and our knees totter with disease or age no more; and then the current of health and joy shall flow on through our veins for ever and ever! Allied now to worms we are, but we are allied to the angels too; the grave is to be our home, but so also is heaven; the worm is our brother, but so also is the Son of God! Such is man; such are his prospects here, such his hopes and destiny in the world to come. He dies here, but he lives in glory and honor hereafter for ever.

16 They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust.

g Jon. 2. 6.

h c. 3. 17—19.

"Shall man, O God of light and life,  
For ever moulder in the grave?  
Canst thou forget thy glorious work,  
Thy promise and thy power to save?"

"Shall life revisit dying worms,  
And spread the joyful insects' wing?  
And O shall man awake no more,  
To see thy face, thy name to sing?"

"Faith sees the bright, eternal doors  
Unfold to make her children way;  
They shall be clothed with endless life,  
And shine in everlasting day.

"The trump shall sound, the dead shall wake,  
From the cold tomb the slumberers spring;  
Through heaven with joy these myriads rise,  
And hail their Saviour and their King."

DR. DWIGHT.

15. *And where is now my hope?* What hope have I of life? What possibility is there of my escape from death? ¶ *Who shall see it?* That is, who will see any hopes that I may now cherish fulfilled? If I cherish any, they will be disappointed, and no one will see them accomplished.

16. *They shall go down.* That is, *my hopes* shall go down. All the expectations that I have cherished of life and happiness will descend there with me. We have a similar expression when we say, that a man "has buried his hopes in the grave," when he loses an only son. ¶ *To the bars of the pit.* "*Bars of Sheol*"—שַׁרְיָתִי. Vulg., "*Profoundest deep.*" Sept., εἰς ᾗδην—to Hades. Sheol, or Hades, was supposed to be under the earth. Its entrance was by the grave as a gate that led to it. It was protected by *bars*—as prisons are—so that those who entered there could not escape. See Notes on Isa. xiv. 9. It was a dark, gloomy dwelling, far away from light, and from the comforts which men enjoy in this life. See Job x. 21, 22. To that dark world Job expected soon to descend; and though he did not regard that as properly a place of *punishment*, yet it was not a place of positive joy. It was a gloomy and wretched world—the land of darkness and of the shadow of death; and he looked to the certainty of going there

not with joy, but with anguish and distress of heart. Had Job been favored with the clear and elevated views of heaven which *we* have in the Christian revelation, death to him would have lost its gloom. We wonder, often, that so good a man expressed such a dread of death, and that he did not look more calmly into the future world. But to do him justice, we should place ourselves in his situation. We should lay aside all that is cheerful and glad in the views of heaven which Christianity has given us. We should look upon the future world as the shadow of death; a land of gloom and spectres; a place beneath the ground—dark, chilly, repulsive; and we shall cease to wonder at the expressions of even so good a man at the prospect of death. When we look at *him*, we should remember with thankfulness the different views which *we* have of the future world, and the source to which we owe them. To

us, if we are pious in any measure as Job was, death is the avenue, not to a world of gloom, but to a world of light and glory. It opens into heaven. There is *no* gloom, no darkness, no sorrow. There all are happy; and there all that is mysterious in this life is made plain—all that is sad is succeeded by eternal joy. These views we owe to that gospel which has brought life and immortality to light; and when we think of death and the future world, when from the midst of woes and sorrows we are compelled to look out on eternity, let us rejoice that we are not constrained to look forward with the sad forebodings of the Sage of Uz, but that we may think of the grave, cheered by the strong consolations of Christian hope of the glorious resurrection. ¶ *When our rest together is in the dust.* The rest of me and my hopes. My hopes and myself will expire together.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

THIS second discourse of Bildad is made up almost entirely of a string of proverbial expressions, showing what must befall the wicked. The design is to prove that the wicked must be punished, and to portray the various kinds of calamities that will come upon them. The *inference* which he manifestly designs should be drawn from his discourse is, that where great calamities come upon a man, there is the most conclusive evidence that he is wicked. The speech contains some particulars peculiarly adapted to the circumstances of Job, and were doubtless intended to be applied to him; and they are such as to leave no doubt that he regarded Job as an eminently wicked man.

The speech consists of two parts.

I. A reproof of Job for the manner in which he had spoken, vs. 1—4. He accuses him of being *long-winded* and interminable in his speech, ver. 2. He complains that he and his friends had been overlooked and despised, and had been regarded as beasts, ver. 3. He accuses Job of insufferable pride and arrogance, as if even the most firm principles of the divine administration were to be changed to accommodate him, ver. 4.

II. A highly-wrought description of the calamities which must come upon a wicked man, vs. 5—21. His light in his dwelling would be put out (vs. 5, 6); his own plans would destroy him, and he would be taken in a net which he himself had spread (vs. 7, 8); he would soon be seized by robbers, who would spring a net unexpectedly upon him (vs. 9, 10); terrors on every side would alarm him (ver. 11); his strength would be wasted (vs. 12, 13); he would be brought to the king of terrors, and brimstone would be sprinkled on his dwelling (vs. 14, 15); he would be like a tree whose roots and branches were dead (ver. 16); his memory would perish from the earth (ver. 17), and he would be chased out of the world (ver. 18); his family and name would become extinct, so that there would be no one to perpetuate his memory on earth (ver. 19); and they who should come after him would be astonished at the total ruin which had come upon the wicked man. That Bildad meant to apply all this to Job, there can be no doubt; and that it would add greatly to his trials is equally clear. He felt it; and his reply in the following chapter is replete with expressions indicative of his intolerable anguish.

**T**HEN answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

2 How long will it be ere ye make an end of words? mark, and afterwards we will speak.

3 Wherefore are we counted

2. *How long will it be ere ye make an end of words?* It has been made a question to whom this is addressed. It is in the plural number, and it is not usual in Hebrew, when addressing an individual, to make use of the plural form. Some have supposed that it is addressed to Job and to Eliphaz, as being both "long-winded" and tedious in their remarks. Others have supposed that it refers to Job and the members of his family, who possibly interposed remarks, and joined Job in his complaints. Others suppose that it refers to Eliphaz and Zophar, as being silent during the speech of Job, and not arresting his remarks as they ought to have done. Rosenmüller supposes that it refers to Job and those similar to him, who were mere feigners of piety, and that Bildad means to ask how long it would be before they would be effectually silenced, and their complaints hushed. I see no great difficulty in supposing that the reference is to Job. The whole strain of the discourse evidently supposes it; and there is no evidence that any of the family of Job had spoken, nor does it seem at all probable that Bildad would reprove his own friends either for the length of their speeches, or for not interrupting another. The custom in the East is to allow a man to utter all that he has to say without interruption. ¶ *Mark.* Heb., *understand*; or *be intelligent*—*הבין*; that is, either speak distinctly, clearly, intelligently; or consider and weigh our arguments. The former is the interpretation of Schultens, and seems to me to be the true one. The idea is this: "You, Job, have been uttering mere words. They are words of complaint, without argument. Speak now in a different manner; show that you understand the case; advance argu-

as beasts, and reputed vile in your sight?

4 He <sup>a</sup> teareth <sup>1</sup> himself in his anger: shall the earth be forsaken for thee? and shall the rock be removed out of his place?

a c. 13. 14.

<sup>1</sup> his soul.

ments that are worthy of attention, and then we will reply."

3. *Wherefore are we counted as beasts.* "Why are we treated in your remarks as if we had no sense, and were unworthy of sound argument in reply to what we say?" It is possible that there may be reference here to what Job said (ch. xii. 7)—that even the *beasts* could give them information about God. But the general idea is, that Job had not treated their views with the attention which they deserved, but had regarded them as unworthy of notice. ¶ And *reputed vile*. The word here used (*טמא*) means to be unclean, or polluted; and the idea is, that Job regarded them as worthless or impious.

4. *He teareth himself.* More correctly, "thou that tearest thyself in anger!" It is not an affirmation about Job, but it is a direct address to him. The meaning is, that he was in the paroxysms of a violent rage; he acted like a madman. ¶ *Shall the earth be forsaken for thee?* A reproof of his pride and arrogance. "Shall everything be made to give way for you? Are you the only man in the world, and of so much importance, that the earth is to be made vacant for you to dwell in? Are the interests of all others to be sacrificed for you, and everything else to give place for you? Are all the laws of God's government to be made to yield rather than that you should be punished?" Similar modes of expression, to denote the insignificance of any one who is proud and arrogant, are still used among the Arabs. "Since Mohammed died, the Imams govern" "The world will not suffer loss on your account." "The world is not dependent on any one man." T. Hunt, in Lowth's Lectures on Hebrew Poetry. Rosen-

5 Yea, the light of the wicked shall <sup>b</sup> be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine.

<sup>b</sup> Pr. 24. 20.

müller's *Morgenland*, in *loc.* ¶ *And shall the rock be removed out of his place?* "Shall the most firm and immutable things give way for your special accommodation? Shall the most important and settled principles of the divine administration be made to bend on your account?" These were *not* the principles and feelings of Job; and great injustice was done to him by this supposition. He was disposed to be submissive in the main to the divine arrangement. But this will describe the feelings of many a man of pride, who supposes that the divine arrangements should be made to *bend* for his special accommodation, and that the great, eternal principles of justice and right should give way rather than that he should be dealt with as common sinners are, and rather than that he should be cast into hell. Such men wish a special place of salvation for themselves. They are too proud to be saved as others are. They complain in their hearts that they are made to suffer, to lose their property, to be sick, or die—as others do. They would wish to be treated with special mercy, and to have special enactments in their favor, and would have the eternal laws of right made to bend for their special accommodation. Such is the pride of the human heart!

5. *Yea.* Truly; or, behold. Bildad here commences his remarks on the certain destiny of the wicked, and strings together a number of apparently proverbial sayings, showing that calamity in various forms would certainly overtake the wicked. There is nothing particularly new in his argument, though the use of the various images which he employs shows how deep was the conviction of this doctrine at that time, and how extensively it prevailed. ¶ *The light of the wicked shall be put out.* Light here is an emblem of prosperity. ¶ *The spark of his fire.* Heb., *the flame of his fire.* There may be an allusion here to the customs of Arabian

6 The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his <sup>1</sup> candle shall be put out with him.

<sup>1</sup> or, *lamp.*

hospitality. This was, and is, their national glory, and it is their boast that no one is ever refused it. The emblem of *fire* or *flame* here may refer to the custom of kindling a fire on an eminence, near a dwelling, to attract the stranger to share the hospitality of the owner of it; or it may refer to the fire in his tent, which the stranger was always at liberty to share. In the collection of the Arabian poems, called the *Hamasa*, this idea occurs almost in the words of Bildad. The extract was furnished me by the Rev. Eli Smith. It is a boast of Salamiel, a prince of Tema. In extolling the virtues of his tribe, he says, "No fire of ours was ever extinguished at night without a guest; and of our guests never did one disparage us." The idea here is, that the wicked would attempt to show hospitality, but the means would be taken away. He would not be permitted to enjoy the coveted reputation of showing it to the stranger, and the fire which might invite the traveller, or which might confer comfort on him, would be put out in his dwelling. The inability to extend the offer of a liberal hospitality would be equivalent to the deepest poverty, or the most trying affliction.

6. *And his candle.* Marg., *lamp.* The reference is to a lamp that was suspended from the ceiling. The Arabians are fond of this image. Thus they say, "Bad fortune has extinguished my lamp." Of a man whose hopes are remarkably blasted, they say, "He is like a lamp which is immediately extinguished if you let it sink in the oil." See *Schultens*. The putting out of a lamp is to the Orientals an image of utter desolation. It is the universal custom to have a light burning in their houses at night. "The houses of Egypt, in modern times, are never without lights; they burn lamps all the night long, and in every occupied apartment. So requisite to the comfort of a family is this custom reckoned, and so impe-

7 The steps of his strength shall be straitened, and his own<sup>c</sup> counsel shall cast him down.

8 For he is cast into a net<sup>d</sup> by his own feet, and he walketh upon a snare.

<sup>c</sup> Pr. 1. 30—32.

<sup>d</sup> Pr. 5. 22. 29. 6.

rious is the power which it exercises, that the poorest people would rather retrench part of their food than neglect it." *Paxton*. It is not improbable that this custom prevailed in former times in Arabia, as it does now in Egypt; and this consideration will give increased beauty and force to this passage.

7. *The steps of his strength*. Strong steps. "Steps of strength" is a Hebraism, to denote firm or vigorous steps. ¶ *Shall be straitened*. Shall be compressed, embarrassed, hindered. Instead of walking freely and at large, he shall be compressed and limited in his goings. "Large steps," "free movement," &c., are proverbial expressions among the Arabs, to denote freedom, prosperity, &c. *Rosenmüller*. Schultens quotes the following illustrations from the Arabic poets. From Ibn Doreid, "He who does not confine himself within human limits, his vast strides shall be straitened." And from Taurizius, "After the battle of Bedrense, the steps were straitened." The meaning here is, that he would be greatly impeded in his movements, instead of going forth at large and in full vigor, as he had formerly done. ¶ *And his own counsel*. His own plans shall be the means of his fall.

8. *For he is cast into a net by his own feet*. He is caught in his own tricks, as if he had spread a net or dug a pitfall for another, and had fallen into it himself. The meaning is, that he would bring ruin upon himself while he was plotting the ruin of others. See Ps. ix. 16, "The wicked is snared by the work of his own hands." Comp. Note, ch. v. 13. The phrase "by his own feet," here means, that he walks there *himself*. He is not led or driven by others, but he goes himself into the net. Wild animals are sometimes driven, but he walks along of his own accord into the net, and has no one to blame but himself.

9 The gin shall take *him* by the heel, *and* the robber shall prevail against him.

10 The snare *is*<sup>1</sup> laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way.

<sup>1</sup> *hidden*.

¶ *And he walketh upon a snare*. Or a pitfall. This was formerly the mode of taking wild beasts. It was done by excavating a place in the earth, and covering it over with turf, leaves, &c., supported in a slender manner; so that the lion, or elephant, or tiger that should tread on it, would fall through. These methods of taking wild beasts have been practised from the earliest times, and are practised everywhere.

9. *The gin*. Another method of taking wild beasts. It was a snare so made as to spring suddenly on an animal, securing him by the neck or feet. We use a trap for the same purpose. The Hebrew word (רֶפֶס) may denote anything of this kind—a snare, net, noose, &c., with which birds or wild animals are taken. ¶ *By the heel*. By the foot. ¶ *And the robber shall prevail*. He shall be overpowered by the highwayman; or the plunderer shall make a sudden descent upon him, and strip him of his all. The meaning is, that destruction would suddenly overtake him. There can be no doubt that Bildad meant to apply all this to Job.

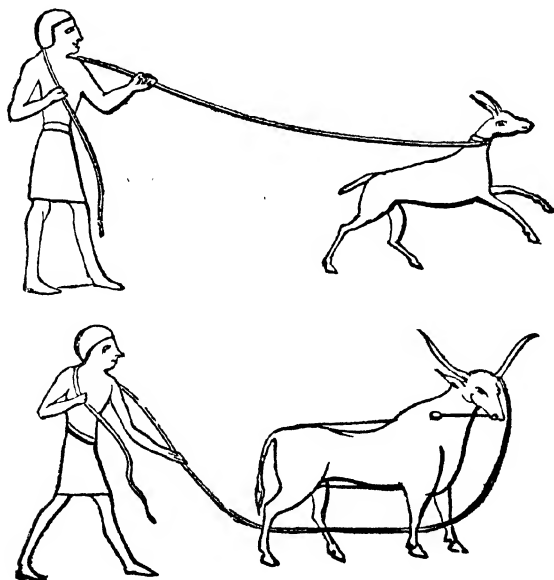
10. *The snare is laid*. All this language is taken from the modes of taking wild beasts; but it is not possible to designate with absolute certainty the methods in which it was done. The word here used (רֶפֶס) means a cord, or rope; and then a snare, gin, or toil, such as is used by hunters. It was used in some way as a noose to secure an animal. This was concealed (Hebrew) "in the earth"—so covered up that an animal would not perceive it, and so constructed that it might be made to spring upon it suddenly. ¶ *And a trap*. We have no reason to suppose that at that time they employed steel to construct traps, as we do now, or that the word here has exactly the sense which

we give to it. The Hebrew word (מִלְכָּדָר) is from לָקַח, *to take, to catch*, and means a noose, snare, spring—by which an animal was seized. It is a *general* term; though undoubtedly used to denote a particular instrument, then well known. The general idea in all this is, that the wicked man would be suddenly seized by calamities, as a wild animal or a bird is taken in a snare. Independently of the interest of the entire passage (vs. 8—10), as a part of the argument of Bildad, it is interesting from the view which it gives of the mode of securing wild animals in the early periods of the world. They had no guns, as we have; but they early learned the art of setting gins and snares by which they were taken. In illustrating this passage, it will not be inappropriate to refer to some of the modes

of hunting practised by the ancient Egyptians, and to introduce here some cuts which may illustrate that mode. The cuts will show that substantially the same methods were practised then in catching birds and taking wild beasts as now, and that there is little novelty in modern practices. The ancients had not only traps, nets, and springes, but also bird-lime smeared upon twigs, and made use of stalking-horses, setting-dogs, &c. The various methods in which this was done may be seen described at length in Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, vol. iii. pp. 1—81. The following cuts will illustrate some of these methods.

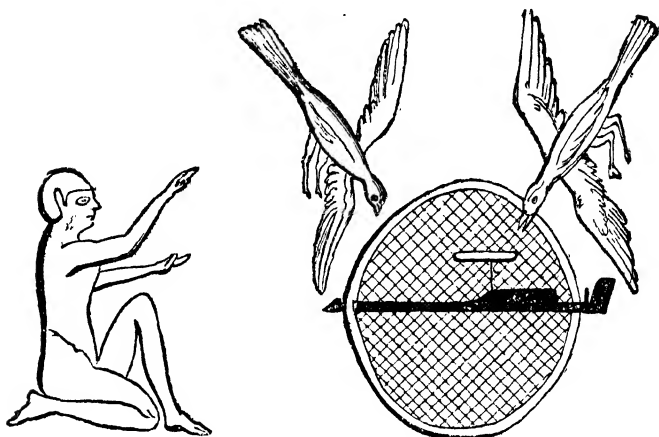
The noose was employed to catch the wild ox, the antelope, and other animals. The following cuts are taken from drawings at Beni Hassan.

Fig. 1.



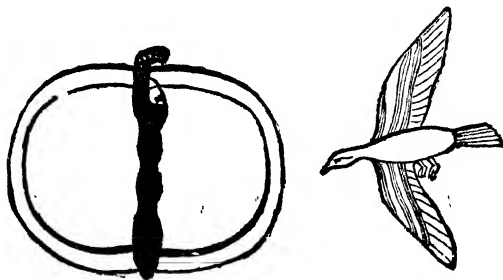
The following specimens of *bird-traps* also are found in the drawings at Beni Hassan. This seems to be a self-acting net, so constructed that the birds, when coming in contact with it, close it upon themselves.

Fig. 2.



The following figure (3) is very similar to this, except that it is oval; it had probably a net like the former. It is composed of two arcs, which, being kept open by machinery in the middle, furnish the oval frame of the net; but when the bird flies in, and knocks out the pin in the centre, the arcs collapse, as is shown in fig. 4, inclosing the bird in the net.

Fig. 3.



11 Terrors <sup>c</sup> shall make him	afraid on every side, and shall <sup>1</sup>
<i>c</i> Je. 20. 3, 4.	drive him his feet.
	<sup>1</sup> scatter.

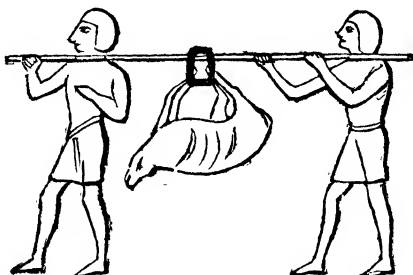
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Fig. 4.



One instance occurs, in a painting at Thebes, of a trap, in which a hyæna is caught, and carried on the shoulders of two men.

Fig. 5.



It was a common method of hunting to inclose a large tract of land by a circle of nets, or to station men at convenient distances, and gradually to contract the circle by coming near to each other, and thus to drive all the wild animals into a narrow enclosure, where they could be easily slain. Some idea of the extent of those enclosures may be formed from the by no means incredible circumstance related by Plutarch, that when the Macedonian conquerors were in Persia, Philotos, the son of Armenio, had hunting nets that would enclose the

space of a hundred furlongs. The Oriental sovereigns have sometimes employed whole armies in this species of hunting. *Pict. Bib.*

11. *Terrors shall make him afraid.* He shall be constantly subject to alarms, and shall never feel secure. "Terrors here are represented as allegorical persons, like the Furies in the Greek poets." *Noyes.* The idea here is substantially the same as that given by Eliphaz, ch. xv. 21, 22. ¶ *And shall drive him to his feet. Marg., scatter.* This is a literal translation of the Hebrew. The idea



12 His strength shall be hungerbitten, and destruction *shall be ready* at his side.

13 It shall devour the <sup>1</sup> strength of his skin: *even* the firstborn of

<sup>1</sup> bars.

death shall devour his strength.

14 His confidence <sup>f</sup> shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the king of terrors.

f Pr. 10. 28.

is, that he will be alarmed by such terrors; his self-composure will be dissipated, and he will "take to his heels."

12. *His strength shall be hungerbitten.* Shall be exhausted by hunger or famine. ¶ *And destruction shall be ready at his side.* Heb., "Shall be fitted (נִכְנָק) to his side." Some have supposed that this refers to some disease, like the pleurisy, that would adhere closely to his side. So Jerome understands it. Schultens has quoted some passages from Arabic poets, in which calamities are represented as *breaking the side*. Bildad refers, probably, to some heavy judgments that would crush a man; such that the ribs, or the human frame, could not bear; and the meaning is, that a wicked man would be certainly crushed by misfortune.

13. *It shall devour the strength of his skin.* Marg., bars. The margin is a correct translation of the Hebrew. The word used (בָּרִי, construct with עוֹר—his skin) means bars, staves, branches, and here denotes his limbs, members; or, more literally, the bones, as supports of the skin, or the human frame. The bones are regarded as the bars, or the framework, holding the other parts of the body in their place, and over which the skin is stretched. The word "it" here refers to the "firstborn of death" in the other hemistich of the verse; and the meaning is, that the strength of his body shall be entirely exhausted. ¶ *The firstborn of death.* The "firstborn" is usually spoken of as distinguished for vigor and strength. Gen. xlix. 3, "Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength;" and the idea conveyed here by the "firstborn of death" is the most fearful and destructive disease that death has ever engendered. Comp. Milton's description of the progeny of sin, in *Paradise Lost*. Diseases are called

"the sons or children of death" by the Arabs, (see Schultens in loc.,) as being begotten by it.

14. *His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle.* Security shall forsake his dwelling, and he shall be subject to constant alarms. There shall be nothing there in which he can confide, and all that he relied on as sources of safety shall have fled. ¶ *And it shall bring him.* That is, he shall be brought. ¶ *To the king of terrors.* There has been much variety in the explanation of this verse. Dr. Noyes renders it, "Terror pursues him like a king." Dr. Good, "Dissolution shall invade him like a monarch." Dr. Stock says, "I am sorry to part with a beautiful phrase in our common version, the king of terrors, as descriptive of death, but there is no authority for it in the Hebrew text." Wemyss renders it, "Terror shall seize him as a king." So Schultens translates it, "Gradietur in eum, instar regis, terrores." Rosenmüller renders it as it is in our version. The Vulgate, *Et calcet super eum, quasi rex, interitus*—"destruction shall tread upon him as a king." The LXX, "and distress shall lay hold on him with the authority of a king"—αἰτία βασιλική. The Chaldee renders it, "shall be brought to the king of terrors," מֶלֶךְ הַתֵּרֶסָה. It is not evident, therefore, that we are to give up the beautiful phrase, the king of terrors. The fair construction of the Hebrew, as it seems to me, is that which is conveyed in our common version—meaning that the wicked man would be conducted, not merely to death, but to that kind of death where a fearful king would preside—a monarch infusing terrors into his soul. There is something singularly beautiful and appropriate in the phrase, "the king of terrors." Death is a fearful monarch. All dread him. He presides in regions

15 It shall dwell in his tabernacle, because *it is* none of his: brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.

16 His roots <sup>g</sup> shall be dried

<sup>g</sup> Is. 5. 24.

of chilliness and gloom. All fear to enter those dark regions where he dwells and reigns, and an involuntary shudder seizes the soul on approaching the confines of his kingdom. Yet all must be brought there; and though man dreads the interview with that fearful king, there is no release. The monarch reigns from age to age—reigns over all. There is but one way in which he will cease to appear as a terrific king.—It is by confidence in Him who came to destroy death; that great Redeemer who has taken away his “sting,” and who can enable man to look with calmness and peace even on the chilly regions where he reigns. The idea here is not precisely that of the Roman and Grecian mythologists, of a terrific king, like Rhadamanthus, presiding over the regions of the dead; but it is of death personified—of death represented as a king fitted to inspire awe and terror.

15. *It shall dwell in his tabernacle.* It is uncertain what is to be understood as referred to here. Some suppose that the word to be understood is *soul*, and that the meaning is “his soul,” *i. e.*, he himself, “shall dwell in his tent.” Rosenmüller, Noyes, Wemyss, and others, suppose that the word is *terror*. “Terror (תִּירָר) shall dwell in his tent,” the same word which is used in the plural in the previous verse. This is undoubtedly the correct sense; and the idea is, that his forsaken tent shall be a place of terror—somewhat, perhaps, as we speak of a forsaken house as *haunted*. It may be that Bildad refers to some such superstitious fear as we sometimes, and almost always in childhood, connect with the idea of a house in which nobody lives. ¶ *Because it is none of his.* It is no longer his. It is a forsaken, tenantless dwelling. ¶ *Brimstone shall be scattered.* Brimstone has been always the image of desolation. Nothing

up beneath, and above shall his branch be cut off.

17 His remembrance <sup>h</sup> shall perish from the earth, and he shall have no name in the street.

<sup>h</sup> Ps. 34. 16.

will grow on a field that is covered with sulphur; and the meaning here is, that his house would be utterly desolate and forsaken. Rosenmüller and Noyes suppose that there is an allusion here to a sudden destruction, such as was that of Sodom and Gomorrah. Grotius doubts whether it refers to that or to lightning. Others suppose that lightning is referred to both here and in Gen. xix. 24; Deut. xxix. 23. I can see no evidence here, however, that there is any reference to Sodom and Gomorrah, or that there is any allusion to lightning. If the allusion had been to Sodom, it would have been more full. That was a case *just in point* in the argument; and the fact that it was exactly in point, and would have furnished to the friends of Job such an irrefragable proof of the position which they were defending, and that it is not inwrought into the very texture of their argument, is full demonstration, to *my* mind, that that remarkable event is not referred to in this place. The only thing necessarily implied in the language before us is, that sulphur, the emblem of desolation, would be scattered on his dwelling, and that his dwelling would be wholly desolate.

16. *His roots shall be dried up.* Another image of complete desolation—where he is compared to a *tree* that is dead—a figure whose meaning is obvious, and which often occurs. See Notes, ch. xv. 30, viii. 12, 13. ¶ *Above shall his branch.* Perhaps referring to his children or family. All shall be swept away—an allusion which Job could not well hesitate to apply to himself.

17. *His remembrance shall perish.* His name—all recollection of him. Calamity shall follow him even after death; and that which every man desires, and every good man has, an honored name when he is dead, will be denied him.

18 <sup>1</sup> He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world.

19 He shall neither <sup>1</sup> have son nor nephew among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings.

<sup>1</sup> They shall drive him.

<sup>2</sup> Is. 14. 22.

Men will hasten to forget him as fast as possible. Comp. Prov. x. 7, "The name of the wicked shall rot." ¶ *No name in the street.* Men when they meet together in highways and places of concourse — when traveller meets traveller, and caravan caravan, shall not pause to speak of him, and of the loss which society has sustained by his death. It is one of the rewards of virtue that the good will speak of the upright man when he is dead; that they will pause in their journey, or in their business, to converse about him; and that the poor and the needy will dwell with affectionate interest upon their loss. *This blessing, Bildad says, will be denied the wicked man. The world will not feel that they have any loss to deplore when he is dead. No great plan of benevolence has been arrested by his removal. The poor and the needy fare as well as they did before. The widow and the fatherless make no grateful remembrance of his name, and the world hastens to forget him as soon as possible. There is no man, except one who is lost to all virtue, who does not desire to be remembered when he is dead — by his children, his neighbors, his friends, and by the stranger who may read the record on the stone that marks his grave. Where this desire is wholly extinguished, man has reached the lowest possible point of degradation, and the last hold on him in favor of virtue has expired.*

18. *He shall be driven from light into darkness.* Marg., *They shall drive him.* The meaning is, that he should be driven from a state of prosperity to one of calamity. ¶ *And chased out of the world.* Perhaps meaning that he should not be conducted to the grave with the slow and solemn pomp of a respectful

20 They that come after *him* shall be astonished at his day, <sup>k</sup> as they that <sup>2</sup> went before <sup>3</sup> were affrighted.

<sup>k</sup> Ps. 37. 13.

<sup>2</sup> or, *lived with him.*

<sup>3</sup> *laid hold on horror.*

funeral, but in a hurry — as a malefactor is driven from human life, and hastily committed to the earth. The living would be glad to be rid of him, and would chase him out of life.

19. *He shall neither have son, &c.* All his family shall be cut off. He shall have no one to perpetuate his name or remembrance. All this Job could not help applying to himself, as it was doubtless intended he should. The facts in his case were just such as were supposed in these proverbs about the wicked; and hence, his friends could not but conclude that he was a wicked man; and hence, too, since these were undisputed maxims, Job felt so much embarrassment in answering them.

20. *They that come after him.* Future ages; they who may hear of his history, and of the manner in which he was cut off from life. So the passage has been generally rendered; so, substantially, it is by Dr. Good, Dr. Noyes, Rosenmüller, and Luther. The Vulgate translates it, *novissimi*; the Sept., *ἔσχατοι* — "the last" — meaning those that should live after him, or at a later period. But Schultens supposes that the word here used denotes those in the West, and the corresponding word rendered "went before," denotes those in the East. With this view Wemyss concurs, who renders the whole verse,

"The West shall be astonished at his end;  
The East shall be panic-struck."

According to this, it means that those who dwell in the remotest regions would be astonished at the calamities which would come upon him. It seems to me that this accords better with the scope of the passage than the other interpretation, and avoids some difficulties which cannot be separated from the other view. The word translated in our version, "that come after him"

21 Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is

the place of him that knoweth not <sup>1</sup> God.

12 Th. 1. 8.

(אַחֲרָיִם) is from אַחַר, to be after, or behind; to stay behind, to delay, remain. It then means *after*, or *behind*; and as in the geography of the Orientals the face was supposed to be turned to the East, instead of being turned to the North, as with us—a much more natural position than ours—the word *after*, or *behind*, comes to denote the West, the right hand the South, the left the North. See Notes on ch. xxiii. 8, 9.

Thus the phrase הַיָּם הַחֲדָשִׁי—the sea behind, denotes the Mediterranean sea—the West. Deut. xxiv. 3. See also Deut. xi. 24; xxxiv. 2; Joel ii. 20, where the same phrase in Hebrew occurs. Those who dwelt in the West, therefore, would be accurately referred to by this phrase. ¶ *Shall be astonished.* Shall be *astonished*—the old mode of writing the word being *astonied*, Isa. lii. 14. It is not known, however, to be used in any other book than the Bible. ¶ *As they that went before.* Marg., or *lived with him.* Noyes, “his elders shall be struck with horror.” Vulg., “et primos invadet horror.” Sept., “amazement seizes the first”—πρώτους. But the more correct interpretation is that which refers it to the people of the East. The word קִדְמֹנִים is from קָדַם, to precede, to go before; and then the derivatives refer to that which goes before, which is in front, &c.; and as the face was turned to the East by geographers, the word comes to express that which is in the East, or near the sun-rising. See Joel ii. 20; Job xxiii. 8; Gen. ii. 8; xii. 8. Hence the phrase

בְּנֵי קִדְמֹנִים—*Benē kēdēm—sons of the East*—meaning the persons who dwelt east of Palestine, Job i. 3; Isa. xi. 14; Gen. xxv. 6; xxix. 1. The word here used, (קִדְמֹנִים—*kādmōnim*,) is used to denote the people or the regions of the East, in Ezek. xlvi. 8, 18; Zech. xiv. 8. Here it means, as it seems to me, the people of the East; and the idea is, that men everywhere would be astonished at the doom of the wicked man. His punishment would be so sudden and entire as to hold the world mute with amazement. ¶ *Were affrighted.* Marg., *laid hold on horror.* This is a more literal rendering. The sense is, they would be struck with horror at what would occur to him.

21. *Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked.* The conclusion or sum of the whole matter. The meaning is, that the habitations of all that knew not God would be desolate—a declaration which Job could not but regard as aimed at himself. Comp. ch. xx. 29. This is the close of this harsh and severe speech. It is no wonder that Job should feel it keenly, and that he *did* feel it is apparent from the following chapter. A string of proverbs had been presented, having the appearance of proof, and as the result of the long observation of the course of events, evidently bearing on his circumstances, and so much in point that he could not well deny their pertinency to his condition. He was stung to the quick, and gave vent to his agonized feelings in the following chapter

## CHAPTER XIX.

## ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

THIS exceedingly beautiful chapter consists of the following parts:—

I. Job complains in the most pathetic manner of the want of feeling in his friends, and of their regarding his calamities as undoubted proof of his guilt, vs. 1—4.

II. He maintains in the most earnest manner, that his calamities had been brought on him by a sovereign God, for some cause unknown to him, but which was not to be regarded as proof of his guilt. Though he could not *answer* the plausible reasoning of his friends, yet he maintained that God, and not his sins, had been the cause of his afflictions, vs. 5—20. He then goes into a pathetic description of the afflictions which God had brought upon him, designed to show that such sufferings *ought* to excite the compassion of his friends, and not to be the occasion of reproach. God had overthrown him (ver. 6), he had refused to hear him (ver. 7); he had hedged up his way (ver. 8); he had stripped him of his glory (ver. 9); he had destroyed him on every side (ver. 10); he had kindled his wrath against him (vs. 11, 12); he had made him an alien and a stranger to his own family, and even children had refused to render him the respect due to age and rank (vs. 13—20).

III. In view of the afflictions which he had suffered at the hand of God, he calls on his friends, in the most pathetic manner, to have pity on him. He asks them why *they* join with God in accumulating sorrows upon him, vs. 21, 22.

IV. Perceiving that the representations of his sufferings had no effect on his friends, and that he was unable to rouse them to any sense of his wrongs, or to obtain justice from them, he suddenly turns from them, and expresses the earnest desire that all that he had said might be engraven on the solid rock for ever, that his case might go down to future times, and that he might obtain in distant ages the justice which was denied him in his own, vs. 23, 24.

V. Yet he is not satisfied with the slow and tardy justice which posterity would render him, but makes his appeal to God, and says that *he* would vindicate his cause. He expresses the firmest assurance that he would come forth in his favour, and rescue his name from the charges which had been brought against it. These sufferings might continue; disease might wholly waste him away; all his flesh might be consumed by worms; and the circumstances on which his friends so confidently relied in proof that he was a hypocrite, might be more aggravated still: yet he had the utmost confidence that God would come forth to vindicate him, and that everything that was dark would be cleared away, vs. 25—27.

VI. He closes by saying, that their treatment of him *ought* to have been different, vs. 28, 29. They could not but have perceived that he had the elements of piety in him, though he was thus overwhelmed; and they had reason to dread the wrath of Heaven for the manner in which they had treated a pious sufferer.

**T**HEN Job answered and said,  
2 How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?

3 These ten <sup>a</sup> times have ye reproached me: ye are not ashamed that ye <sup>1</sup> make yourselves strange to me.

<sup>a</sup> Ge. 31. 7.

<sup>1</sup> or, *harden yourselves against me.*

2. *How long will ye vex my soul.* Perhaps designing to reply to the taunting speech of Bildad, ch. xviii. 2. He had asked, "how long it would be ere Job would make an end of empty talk? Job asks, in reply, *how long* they would torture and afflict his soul? Or whether there was no hope that this would ever come to an end! ¶ *And break me in pieces.* Crush me, or bruise me—like breaking anything in a mortar, or breaking rocks by repeated blows of

the hammer. *Noyes.* He says they had crushed him, as if by repeated blows.

3. *These ten times.* Many times; the word *ten* being used as we often say, *ten, a dozen, or twenty*, to denote many. See Gen. xxxi. 7. "And your father hath changed my wages *ten times*." Lev. xxvi. 26. "And when I have broken your staff of bread, *ten women* shall bake your bread in one oven." Comp. Num. xiv. 22; Neh. iv. 12.

4 And be it indeed *that* I have erred, mine error remaineth with myself.

5 If indeed ye will magnify <sup>b</sup>

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 38. 16.

¶ *Ye are not ashamed that ye make yourselves strange to me. Marg., harden yourselves against me.* Gesenius, and after him Noyes, renders this, "Shameless ye stun me." Wemyss, "Are ye not ashamed to treat me thus cruelly?" The word here used (נָחַר—*nākhār*) occurs nowhere else, and hence it is difficult to determine its meaning. The Vulgate renders it, "*oppressing me.*" The LXX, "and you are not ashamed to press upon me"—ἐπιπίεσθαι μοι. Schultens has gone into an extended examination of its meaning, and supposes that the primary idea is that of being *stiff*, or *rigid*. The word in Arabic, he says, means to be *stupid with wonder*. It is applied, he supposes, to those who are *stiff* or *rigid* with stupor; and then to those who have a stony heart and an iron forehead—and who can look on the suffering without feeling or compassion. This sense accords well with the connexion here. Gesenius, however, supposes that the primary idea is that of beating or pounding; and hence of stunning by repeated blows. In either case, the sense would be substantially the same—that of *stunning*. The idea given by our translators of making themselves "*strange*" was derived from the supposition that the word might be formed from נָחַר—*nākhār*—to be strange, foreign; to estrange, alienate, &c. For a more full examination of the word, the reader may consult Schultens, or Rosenmüller *in loco*.

4. *And be it indeed that I have erred.* Admitting that I have erred, it is my own concern. You have not a right to reproach and revile me in this manner. ¶ *Mine error remaineth with myself.* I must abide the consequences of the error. The design of this seems to be, to reprove what he regarded as an improper and meddlesome interference with his concerns. Or it may be an

*yourselves* against me, and plead against me my reproach:

6 Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me with his net.

expression of a willingness to bear all the consequences himself. He was willing to meet all the fair results of his own conduct.

5. *If indeed ye will magnify yourselves against me.* This is connected with the next verse. The sense is, "all these calamities came from God. He has brought them upon me in a sudden and mysterious manner. In these circumstances you ought to have pity upon me, ver. 21. Instead of magnifying yourselves against me, setting yourselves up as censors and judges, overwhelming me with reproaches, and filling my mind with pain and anguish, you ought to show to me the sympathy of a friend." The phrase, "magnify yourselves," refers to the fact that they had assumed a tone of superiority and an authoritative manner, instead of showing the compassion due to a friend in affliction. ¶ *And plead against me my reproach.* My calamities as a cause of reproach. You urge them as a proof of the displeasure of God, and you join in reproaching me as a hypocrite. Instead of this, you should have shown compassion to me as a man whom God had greatly afflicted.

6. *Know now that God.* Understand the case: and in order that they might, he goes into an extended description of the calamities which God had brought upon him. He wished them to be fully apprised of all that he had suffered at the hand of God. ¶ *Hath overthrown me.* The word here used (פָּרַק) means to bend, to make crooked or curved; then to distort, pervert; then to overturn, to destroy. Isa. xxiv. 1; Lam. iii. 9. The meaning here is, that he had been in a state of prosperity, but that God had completely reversed everything. ¶ *And hath compassed me with his net.* Has sprung his net upon me as a hunter does, and I am caught. Perhaps there may be an allusion here

7 Behold, I cry out of <sup>1</sup>wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but *there is* no judgment.

8 He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass, and he hath set darkness in my paths.

9 He hath stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown *from* my head.

<sup>1</sup> or, *violence*.

to what Bildad said in ch. xviii. 8, seq., that the wicked would be taken in his own snares. Instead of that, Job says that *God* had sprung the snare upon him—for reasons which he could not understand, but in such a manner as should move the compassion of his friends.

7. *Behold, I cry out of wrong.* Marg., or *violence*. The Hebrew word (עָוֹן) means, properly, *violence*. The violence referred to is that which was brought upon him by God. It is, indeed, harsh language; but it is not quite sure that he means to complain of God for doing him injustice. God had dealt with him in a severe or violent manner is the meaning, and he had cried unto him for relief, but had cried in vain. ¶ *No judgment.* No justice. The meaning is, that he could obtain justice from no one. God would not interpose to remove the calamities which he had brought upon him, and his friends would do no justice to his motives and character.

8. *He hath fenced up my way.* This figure is taken from a traveller, whose way is obstructed by trees, rocks, or fences, so that he cannot get along, and Job says it was so with him. He was travelling along in a peaceful manner on the journey of life, and all at once obstructions were put in his path, so that he could not go farther. This does not refer, particularly, to his spiritual condition, if it does at all. It is descriptive of the obstruction of his plans, rather than of spiritual darkness or distress. ¶ *And he hath set darkness in my paths.* So that I cannot see—as if all around the traveller should become suddenly dark, so that he could

10 He <sup>c</sup> hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone: and mine hope hath he removed like a tree.

11 He hath also kindled his wrath against me, and he counteth me unto him as *one of* his enemies.

<sup>c</sup> La. 2. 5, 6.

not discern his way. *The language* here would well express the spiritual darkness which the friends of God sometimes experience, though it is by no means certain that Job referred to that. All the dealings of God are to them mysterious, and there is no light in the soul—and they are ready to sink down in despair.

9. *He hath stripped me of my glory.* Everything which I had that contributed to my respectability and honor, he has taken away. My property, my health, my family, the esteem of my friends—all is gone. ¶ *And taken the crown from my head.* The crown is an emblem of honor and dignity—and Job says that God had removed all that contributed to his former dignity. Comp. Prov. iv. 9, xvii. 6; Ezek. xvi. 12; Lam. v. 16.

10. *He hath destroyed me on every side.* He has left me nothing. The word which is here used is that which is commonly applied to destroying cities, towns, and houses. Rosenmüller. ¶ *And I am gone.* That is, I am near death. I cannot recover myself. ¶ *And mine hope hath he removed like a tree.* A tree, which is plucked up by the roots, and which does not grow again. That is, his hopes of life and happiness, of an honored old age, and of a continuance of his prosperity, had been wholly destroyed. This does not refer to his *religious* hope—as the word *hope* is often used now—but to his desire of future comfort and prosperity in this life. It does not appear but that his religious hope, arising from confidence in God, remained unaffected.

11. *He hath also kindled his wrath.* He is angry. Wrath in the Scriptures

12 His troops come together, and raise up their way against me, and encamp round about my tabernacle.

13 He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me.

is usually represented as burning or inflamed—because, like fire, it destroys everything before it. ¶ *And he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies.* He treats me as he would an enemy. The same complaint he elsewhere makes. See ch. xiii. 24; perhaps also in ch. xvi. 9. We are not to understand Job here as admitting that he was an enemy of God. He constantly maintained that he was not, but he was constrained to admit that God *treated* him as if he were his enemy, and he could not account for it. *On this ground*, therefore, he now maintains that his friends ought to show him compassion, instead of trying to prove that he *was* an enemy of God; they ought to pity a man who was so strangely and mysteriously afflicted, instead of increasing his sorrows by endeavoring to demonstrate that he was a man of eminent wickedness.

12. *His troops.* The calamities which he had sent, and which are here represented as *armies* or *soldiers* to accomplish his work. It is not probable that he refers here to the bands of the Chaldeans and the Sabeans, that had robbed him of his property, but to the calamities that had come upon him, as if they were bands of robbers. ¶ *And raise up their way.* As an army that is about to lay siege to a city, or that is marching to attack it, casts up a way of access to it, and thus obtains every facility to take it. See Notes on Isa. xl. 3, lvii. 14. ¶ *And encamp round about my tabernacle.* In the manner of an army besieging a city. Often an army encamped in this manner for months or even years, in order to reduce the city by famine. ¶ *My tabernacle.* My tent; my dwelling.

13. *He hath put my brethren.* This

14 My <sup>d</sup> kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.

15 They that dwell in mine house, and my maids, count me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight.

*d Ps. 38. 11.*

is a new source of affliction that he had not adverted to before, that God had caused all his children to be estranged from him—a calamity which he regarded as the crown of all his woes. The word rendered “my brethren” (אֶחָיו) means, properly, *my brothers*—but whether he means literally his brothers, or whether he designs it to be taken in a figurative sense, as denoting his intimate friends, or those of the same rank in life or calling, it is impossible now to determine. ¶ *And mine acquaintance.* My friends—on whom I relied in time of calamity. ¶ *Are verily estranged.* They have forgotten me, and treat me as a stranger. What an accurate description is this of what often occurs! In prosperity, a man will be surrounded by friends; but as soon as his prosperity is stripped away, and he is overwhelmed with calamity, they withdraw, and leave him to suffer alone. Proud of his acquaintance before, they now pass him by as a stranger, or treat him with cold civility, and when he *needs* their friendship, they are gone.

14. *My kinsfolk have failed.* My neighbors (רֵעֵי), those who were near to me. It may refer to *nearness* of affinity, friendship, or residence. The essential idea is that of *nearness*—whether by blood, affection, or vicinity. In Ps. xxxviii. 12, it denotes near friends. ¶ *And my familiar friends.* Those who knew me—רֵעֵי. The allusion is to those who were *intimately* acquainted with him, or who were his bosom friends.

15. *They that dwell in mine house.* The trials came to his very dwelling, and produced a sad estrangement there. The word here used (נָכַר from נָכַר) means, properly, those who *sojourn* in a



16 I called my servant, and he gave me no answer; I intreated him with my mouth.

17 My breath is strange to my

house for a little time. It may refer to guests, strangers, servants, clients, or tenants. The essential idea is, that they were not *permanent* residents, though for a time they were inmates of the family. Jerome renders the place, *Inquilini domus mea—the tenants of my house*. The LXX, *Γειτοὶ οἰκίας—neighbors*. Schultens supposes it means *clients*, or those who were taken under the protection of a great man. He quotes from the Arabian poets to show that the word is used in that sense, and particularly a passage from the *Hamasa*, which he thus translates:

"Descendite sub alas meas, alasque gentis meae,  
Ut sim præsidium vobis, quum pugna conseritur.

Namque testamento injunxit mihi pater, ut  
reciperem vos hospites,

Omneque oppressorem a vobis propulsarem."

There can be no doubt that Job refers to *dependents*, but whether in the capacity of servants, tenants, or clients, it is not easy to determine, and is not material. Dr. Good renders it "*sojourners*," and this is a correct rendering of the word. This would be clearly the sense if the corresponding member of the parallelism were not "*maids*," or female servants. *That* requires us to understand here persons who were *somehow* engaged in the service of Job. Perhaps his clients, or those who came for protection, were under obligation to some sort of service as the return for his patronage. ¶ *And my maids*. Female domestics. The Chaldee, however, renders this *נָשִׁים*, *my concubines*; but the correct reference is to female servants. ¶ *I am an alien*. That is, to them. They cease to treat me as the head of the family.

16. *I called my servant*. He lost all respect for me, and paid me no attention. ¶ *I intreated him*. I ceased to expect obedience, and tried to see what *persuasion* would do. I ceased to be master in my own house.

wife, though I intreated for the children's sake of <sup>1</sup> mine own body.

<sup>1</sup> my belly.

17. *My breath is strange to my wife*. Schultens renders this, "my breath is loathsome to my wife," and so also Noyes. Wemyss translates it, "my own wife turns aside from my breath." Dr. Good, "my breath is scattered away by my wife." The literal meaning is, "my breath is *strange* (יָרֵחַ) to my wife;" and the idea is, that there had been such a change in him from his disease, that his breath was not that which she had been accustomed to breathe without offence, and that she now turned away from it as if it were the breath of a stranger. Jerome renders it, *Halitum meum exhorruit uxor mea—my wife abhors my breath*. It may be worthy of remark here, that but one wife of Job is mentioned—a remarkable fact, as he probably lived in an age when polygamy was common. ¶ *I intreated*. I appealed to her by all that was tender in the domestic relation, but in vain. From this it would seem that even his wife had regarded him as an object of divine displeasure, and had also left him to suffer alone. ¶ *For the children's sake of mine own body*. Marg., *my belly*. There is considerable variety in the interpretation of this passage. The word rendered "my own body" (בְּטֶנִי), means, literally, *my belly*, or *womb*; and Noyes, Gesenius, and some others, suppose it means the children of his own mother! But assuredly this was scarcely an appeal that Job would be likely to make to his wife in such circumstances. There can be no impropriety in supposing that Job referred to himself, and that the word is used somewhat in the same sense as the word *loins* is in Gen. xxxv. 11, xlv. 26; Ex. i. 5; 1 Kings viii. 19. Thus understood, it would refer to his own children, and the appeal to his wife was founded on the relation which they had sustained to them. Though they were now dead, he referred to their former united at-

18 Yea, <sup>1</sup> young children despised me; I arose, and they spake against me.

19 All <sup>2</sup> my inward friends abhorred me: and they whom I

<sup>1</sup> or, the wicked.

<sup>2</sup> The men of my secret.

tachment to them, to the common affliction which they had experienced in their loss; and in view of all their former love to them, and all the sorrow which they had experienced in their death, he made an appeal to his wife to show him kindness, but in vain. Jerome renders this, "Orabam filios uteri mei." The LXX, not understanding it, and trying to make sense of it, introduced a statement which is undoubtedly false, though Rosenmüller accords with it. "I called affectionately (κολακεύων) the sons of my concubines"—*νιούς παλλακίδων μου*. But the whole meaning is evidently that he made a solemn and tender appeal to his wife, in view of all the joys and sorrows which they had experienced as the united head of a family of children now no more. What would reach the heart of an estranged wife, if such an appeal would not?

18. *Yea, young children.* Marg., or the wicked. This difference between the text and the margin arises from the ambiguity of the original word—*עויל*. The word *עויל* (whence our word *evil*) means sometimes the wicked, or the ungodly, as in Job xvi. 11. It may also mean a child, or suckling, (from *על*—to give milk, to suckle, 1 Sam. vi. 7—10; Gen. xxxiii. 13; Psalm lxxviii. 71; Isa. xl. 11; comp. Isa. xlix. 15, lxxv. 20.) and is doubtless used in this sense here. Jerome, however, renders it *stulti*—fools. The LXX, strangely enough, "They renounced me for ever." Dr. Good renders it, "Even the dependents." So Schultens, *Etiam clientes egentissimi—even the most needy clients*. But the reference is probably to children who are represented as withholding from him the respect which was due to age. ¶ *I arose, and they spake against me.* "When I rise up, instead of regarding and treating me with respect, they make

loved are turned against me.

20 My <sup>c</sup> bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.

c Ps. 102. 5.

me an object of contempt and sport." Comp. the account of the respect which had formerly been shown him in ch. xxix. 8.

19. *All my inward friends.* Marg., the men of my secret. The meaning is, those who were admitted to the intimacy of friendship, or who were permitted to be acquainted with his secret thoughts, purposes, and plans. The word here used (*רֵעִים*) denotes properly a couch, cushion, pillow, on which one reclines; then a divan, a circle of persons sitting together for consultation or conversation; and hence it refers to those who are sitting together in intimate counsel, (see Notes on ch. xv. 8, xxix. 4.) and then familiar intercourse, intimacy. Here the phrase, "men of my intimacy" (*רֵעִים*), denotes those who were admitted to intimate friendship. All such persons had now forsaken him, and turned against him.

20. *My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh.* The meaning of this probably is, "my skin and flesh are dried up so that the bone seems to adhere to the skin, and so that the form of the bone becomes visible." It is designed to denote a state of great emaciation, and describes an effect which we often see. ¶ *And I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.* A very difficult expression, and which has greatly perplexed commentators, and on whose meaning they are by no means agreed. Dr. Good renders it, "and in the skin of my teeth am I dissolved;" but what that means is as difficult of explanation as the original. Noyes, "and I have scarcely escaped with the skin of my teeth." Herder, (as translated by Marsh,) "and scarcely the skin in my teeth have I brought away as a spoil." He says that "the figure is taken from the prey which wild beasts carry in their teeth; his skin is his poor and wretched body, which

21 Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.

alone he had escaped with. His friends are represented as carnivorous animals which gnaw upon his skin, upon the poor remnant of life; but the Hebrew will not bear this construction. Poole observes, quaintly enough, that it means, "I am scarcely sound and whole and free from sores in any part of my skin, except that of my jaws, which holdeth and covereth the roots of my teeth. This being, as divers observe, the devil's policy, to leave his mouth untouched, that he might more freely express his mind, and vent his blasphemies against God, which he supposed sharp pain would force him to do." Schultens has mentioned four different interpretations given to the phrase, none of which seems to be perfectly satisfactory. They are the following: (1.) That it means that the skin *about* the teeth alone was preserved, or the gums and the lips, so that he had the power of speaking, though every other part was wasted away; and this exposition is given, accompanied with the suggestion that his faculty of speech was preserved entire by Satan, in order that he might be *able* to utter the language of complaint and blasphemy against God. (2.) That he was emaciated and exhausted completely, *except* the skin about his teeth, that is, his lips, and that by them he was kept alive; that if it were not for them, he could not breathe, but must soon expire. (3.) That the teeth themselves had fallen out by the force of disease, and that nothing was left but the gums. This opinion Schultens himself adopts. The image, he says, is taken from pugilists, whose teeth are knocked out by each other; and the meaning he supposes to be, that Job had been treated by his disease in the same manner. So violent had it been, that he had lost all his teeth, and nothing was left but his gums. (4.) A fourth opinion is, that the reference is to the *enamel* of the teeth, and that the meaning is, that such was the force and

22 Why do ye persecute <sup>f</sup> me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh?

*f* Ps. 69. 26.

extent of his afflictions, that all his teeth became hollow and were decayed, leaving only the enamel. It is difficult to determine the true sense amidst a multitude of learned conjectures; but probably the most simple and easy interpretation is the best. It may mean, that he was *almost* consumed. Disease had preyed upon his frame until he was wasted away. Nothing was left but his lips, or his gums; he was just able to speak, and that was all. So Jerome renders it, *delicta sunt tantummodo labia circa dentes meos*. Luther renders it, *und kann meine Zähne mit der Haut nicht bedecken*—"and I cannot cover my teeth with the skin;" that is, with the lips.

21. *Have pity upon me*. A tender, pathetic cry for sympathy. "God has afflicted me, and stripped me of all my comforts, and I am left a poor, distressed, forsaken man. I make my appeal to you, my friends, and entreat you to have pity; to sympathize with me, and to sustain me by the words of consolation." One would have supposed these words would have gone to the heart, and that we should hear no more of their bitter reproofs. But far otherwise was the fact. ¶ *The hand of God hath touched me*. Hath smitten me; or is heavy upon me. The meaning is, that he had been subjected to great calamities by God, and that it was right to appeal now to his friends, and to expect their sympathy and compassion. On the usual meaning of the word here rendered "*hath touche*d" (חָטַקְתָּ from חָטַק), see Notes on Isa. liii. 4.

22. *Why do ye persecute me as God*. As God has done. That is, without giving me any reason for it; accusing me of crimes without proof, and condemning me without mitigation. That there is here *an* improper reflection on God, will be apparent to all. It accords with what Job frequently expresses where he speaks of him as judg-

23 Oh <sup>1</sup> that my words were

<sup>1</sup> *who will give.*

ing him severely, and is one of the instances which prove that he was not entirely perfect. ¶ *And are not satisfied with my flesh?* That is, are not contented that my *body* is subjected to inexpressible torments, and is wholly wasting away, but add to this the torment of the soul. Why is it not enough that my *body* is thus tormented, without adding the severer torments of the mind?

23. *Oh that my words were now written!* Marg., as in Heb., “*Who will give;*” a common mode of expressing desire among the Hebrews. This expression of desire introduces one of the most important passages in the book of Job. It is the language of a man who felt that injustice was done him by his friends, and that he was not likely to have justice done him by that generation. He was charged with hypocrisy; his motives were called in question; his solemn appeals, and his arguments to assert his innocence, were disregarded; and in this state of mind he expresses the earnest wish that his expressions might be permanently recorded, and go down to far distant times. He desired that what he had said might be preserved, that future ages might be able to judge between him and his accusers, and to know the justice of his cause. The desire thus expressed has been granted, and a more permanent record has been made than if, in accordance with his request, his sentiments had been engraved on lead or stone. ¶ *Oh that they were printed.* It is clear that this expression may convey wholly an erroneous idea. The art of *printing* was then unknown; and the passage has no allusion to that art. The original word (פָּתַח) means, properly, to cut in, to hew; then to cut—e. g., a sepulchre in a rock, Isa. xxii. 16; then to cut, or engrave letters on a tablet of lead or stone, Isa. xxx. 8, Ezek. iv. 1, and generally it implies the notion of engraving, or inscribing on a plate with an engraving tool. Anciently books were made of materials which allowed of this mode of

now written! Oh that they were printed in a book!

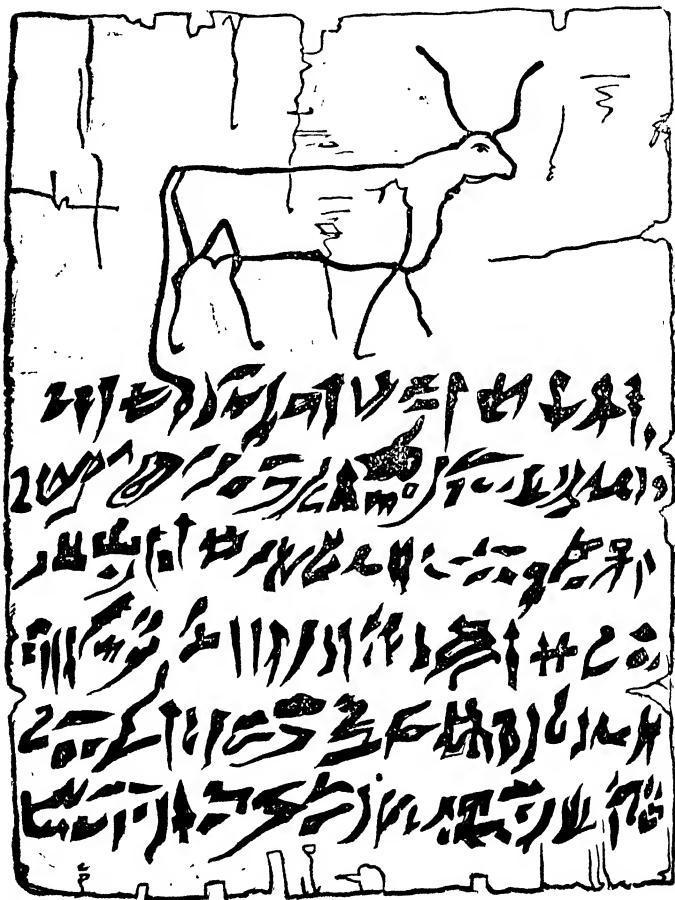
making a record. Stone would probably be the first material; and then plates of metal, leaves, bark, skins, &c. The notion of *engraving*, however, is the proper idea here. ¶ *In a book,* יֵצֵא. The word יֵצֵא is derived from יָצָא.

In Arabic, the kindred word شَفَر

means to scratch, to scrape; and hence to engrave, write, record—and the idea was originally that of insculping or engraving on a stone. Hence the word comes to denote a book, of any materials, or made in any form. Pliny, speaking of the materials of ancient books, says, *Olim in palmarum foliis scriptitatum, et libris quarundam arborum; postea publica monumenta plumbeis voluminibus, mox et privata linteis confici cepta aut ceris.* Lib. xiii. 11. “At first, men wrote on the leaves of the palm, or the bark of certain trees; but afterwards public documents were preserved in leaden volumes [or rolls], and those of a private nature on wax or linen.” “Montfaucon purchased at Rome, in 1699, an ancient book entirely composed of lead. It was about four inches long and three inches wide: and not only were the two pieces that formed the cover, and the leaves, six in number, of lead, but also the stick inserted through the rings to hold the leaves together, as well as the hinges and nails. It contained Egyptian Gnostic figures and unintelligible writing. Brass, as more durable, was used for the inscriptions designed to last the longest, such as treaties, laws, and alliances. These public documents were, however, usually written on large tablets. The style for writing on brass and other hard substances was sometimes tipped with diamond.” The meaning of the word here is evidently a record made on stone or lead—for so the following verses indicate. The art of writing or engraving was known in the time of Job; but I do not know that there is evidence that the art of writing on leaves, bark, or vellum was yet under-

stood. As *books* in the form in which they are now were then unknown; as there is no evidence that at that time anything like *volumes* or *rolls* were possessed; as the records were probably preserved on tablets of stone or lead; and as the entire description here pertains to something that was *engraved*; and as this sense is conveyed by the

Arabic verb from which the word סֵפֶר, *book*, is derived, the word *tablet*, or some kindred word, will better express the sense of the original than *book*—and I have, therefore, used it in the translation. It may be interesting, however, to see a specimen of the mode of writing on papyrus, and accordingly I insert one in this place.



24 That they were graven with

an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!

24. *That they were graven.* Cut in, or sculptured—as is done on stones. That they might become thus a permanent record. ¶ *With an iron pen.* A stylus, or an engraving tool—for so the word (סָטֵל) means. The instrument formerly used for writing or engraving was a small, sharp-pointed piece of iron or steel, that was employed to mark on lead or stone—somewhat in the form of small graving tools now. When the writing was on wax, the instrument was made with a flat head, that it could be obliterated by pressing it on or passing it over the wax. The engraving on the next page, from Montfaucon's *Paleographia Graeca*, will illustrate the ancient use of the stylus.

The reason why Job mentions the *iron pen* here is, that he wished a *permanent* record. He did not desire one made with paint or chalk, but one which would convey his sentiments down to future times. ¶ *And lead.* That is, either engraved on lead, or more probably with lead. It was customary to cut the letters deep in stone, and then to fill them up with lead, so that the record became more permanent. This I

take to be the meaning here. The Hebrew will scarcely allow of the supposition that Job meant that the records should be made on plates of lead—though such plates were early used, but perhaps not until after the time of Job. ¶ *In the rock.* It was common, at an early period, to make inscriptions on the smooth surface of a rock. Perhaps the first that were made were on stones, which were placed as way-marks, or monuments over the dead—as we now make such inscriptions on grave stones. Then it became common to record any memorable transaction—as a battle—on stones or rocks; and perhaps, also, sententious and apophthegmatical remarks were recorded in this manner, to admonish travellers, or to transmit them to posterity. Numerous inscriptions of this kind are found by travellers in the East, on tombs, and on rocks in the desert. All that can be appropriate here is a notice of such early inscriptions of that kind in Arabia as would render it probable that they existed in the time of Job, or such as indicate great antiquity. Happily we are at no loss for such inscriptions on rocks in the country where Job lived.



GROUP ILLUSTRATING THE USE OF THE STYLUS

The Wady Mokatta, the cliffs of which bear some of these inscriptions, is a valley entering Wady Sheikh, and bordering the upper regions of the Sinai mountains. It extends for about three hours' march, and in most places its rocks present abrupt cliffs, twenty or thirty feet high. From these cliffs large masses have separated, and lie at the bottom of the valley. The cliffs and rocks are thickly covered with inscriptions, which are con-

tinued at intervals of a few hundred paces only, for at least the distance of two hours and a half. Burckhardt, in his travels from Akaba to Cairo, by Mount Sinai, observed many inscriptions on the rocks, part of which he has copied. See his travels in Syria, Lond. Ed. pp. 506, 581, 582, 606, 613, 614. The following cut, from Laborde, exhibits a view of one of the engravings on the rocks in the Wady Mokatta:



ENGRAVINGS ON THE ROCKS IN THE WADY MOKATTA.

The following, found on the stones in the Wady Aleyat, will give an idea of the appearance of another of those inscriptions. They are copied from Burckhardt's *Travels in Syria*, pp. 613, 614.

1. Upon a flat stone in the upper extremity of the Wady:

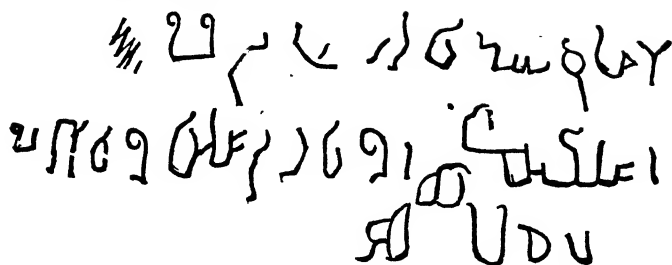
כח פח ים ים ים ים ים ים ים ים  
 כח פח ים ים ים ים ים ים ים ים

2. Upon a small block lower down:

כח פח ים ים ים ים ים ים ים ים



## 3. Upon a small rock still lower down :



See other specimens in Burckhardt, *Ibid.* Pococke, who also visited the regions of Mount Sinai in 1777, has given a description of the inscriptions which he saw on the rocks at Mount Sinai. Vol. i. 148, he says, "There are on many of the rocks, both near these mountains and in the road, a great many inscriptions in an ancient character; many of them I copied, and observed that most of them were not cut, but stained, making the granite of a lighter color, and where the stone had scaled, I could see the stain had sunk into the stone." Numerous specimens of these inscriptions may be seen in Pococke, vol. i., p. 148. These inscriptions were also observed by Robinson and Smith, and are described by them in *Biblical Researches*, vol. i., 108, 118, 119, 123, 161, 167. They are first mentioned by Cosmas, about A.D. 535. He supposed them to be the work of the ancient Hebrews, and says that certain Jews who had read them, explained them to him as noting "the journey of such an one, out of such a tribe, in such a year and month." They have also been noticed by many early travellers, as Neitzschitz, p. 149; Moncongs, i., p. 245; and also by Niebuhr in his *Reisebeschr.* i., p. 250. The copies of them given by Pococke and Niebuhr are said to be very imperfect; those by Seetzen are better; and those made by Burckhardt are tolerably accurate. *Rob. Bib. Research.* i., 553. A large number of them have been copied and published by Mr. Grey, in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature*, vol. iii.,

pt. 1, Lond. 1832; consisting of one hundred and seventy-seven in the unknown character, nine in Greek, and one in Latin. These inscriptions, which so long excited the curiosity of travellers, have been recently deciphered (in the year 1839) by Professor Beer, of the University of Leipzig. He had turned his attention to them in the year 1833, but without success. In the year 1839, his attention was again turned to them, and after several months of the most persevering application, he succeeded in making out the alphabet, and was enabled to read all the inscriptions, which have been copied with a good degree of accuracy. According to the results of this examination, the *characters* of the Sinaitic inscriptions belong to a distinct and independent alphabet. Some of the letters are wholly peculiar; the others have more or less affinity with the Palmyrene, and particularly with the Estrangelo and the Cufic. They are written from right to left. The *contents* of the inscriptions, so far as examined, consist only of proper names, preceded by a word which is usually *שלום*, *peace*, though occasionally some other word is used. In one or two instances, the name is followed by a sentence, which has not yet been deciphered. The names are those common in Arabic. It is a remarkable fact that not one Jewish or Christian name has been found. The question as to the *writers* of these inscriptions receives very little light from their contents. A word at the end of some of them may be so read as to affirm that they were *pilgrims*, and

25 For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall

stand at the latter *day* upon the earth:

this opinion Professor Beer adopts; but this is not certain. That the writers were *Christians* seems apparent from many of the crosses connected with the inscriptions. The *age*, also, of the inscriptions receives no light from their contents, as no date has yet been read. Beer supposes that the greater part of them could not have been written earlier than the fourth century. Little light, therefore, is cast upon the question who wrote them; what was their design; in what age they were written, or who were the *pilgrims* who wrote them. See Rob. Bib. Research. i., 552—556. That there were such records in the time of Job is probable.

25. *For I know that my redeemer liveth.* There are few passages in the Bible which have excited more attention than this, or in respect to which the opinions of expositors have been more divided. The importance of the passage (vs. 25—27) has contributed much to the anxiety to understand its meaning, since, if it refers to the Messiah, it is one of the most valuable of all the testimonials now remaining of the early faith on that subject. The importance of the passage will justify a somewhat more extended examination of its meaning than it is customary to give in a commentary of a single passage of Scripture; and I shall (1) give the views entertained of it by the translators of the ancient, and some of the modern versions; (2) investigate the meaning of the *words* and *phrases* which occur in it; and (3) state the arguments, *pro* and *con*, for its supposed reference to the Messiah. The Vulgate renders it, "For I know that my Redeemer—*Redemptor meus*—lives, and that in the last day I shall rise from the earth; and again, I shall be enveloped—*circumdabor*—with my skin, and in my flesh shall I see my God. Whom I myself shall see, and my eyes shall behold, and not another—this, my hope, is laid up in my bosom." The LXX translate it, "For I know that he is Eternal who is about to deliver me—ὁ ἐκλείπει με μέλλον

—to raise again upon earth this skin of mine, which draws up these things—τὸ ἀναστρέφειν ταῦτα—[the meaning of which, I believe, no one has ever been able to divine.] For from the Lord these things have happened to me of which I alone am conscious, which my eye has seen, and not another, and which have all been done to me in my bosom." *Thompson's trans. in part.* The Syriac is in the main a simple and correct rendering of the Hebrew, "I know that my Redeemer (אֱלֹהִים) liveth,

and in the consummation (אֲחֵרִית) he will be revealed upon the earth, and after my skin I shall bless myself in these things, and after my flesh. If my eyes shall see God, I shall see light." The Chaldee accords with our version, except in one phrase, "And afterwards my skin shall be inflated, (כְּפָרָה) —then in my flesh shall I see God." It will be seen that some perplexity was felt by the authors of the ancient versions in regard to the passage. Much more has been felt by expositors. Some notices of the views of the moderns, in regard to particular words and phrases, will be given in the exposition. ¶ *I know.* I am certain. On that point Job desires to express the utmost confidence. His friends might accuse him of hypocrisy—they might charge him with want of piety, and he might not be able to refute all that they said; but in the position referred to here he would remain fixed, and with this firm confidence he would support his soul. It was this which he wished to have recorded in the eternal rocks, that the record might go down to future times. If after ages should be made acquainted with his name and his sufferings—if they should hear of the charges brought against him, and of the accusations of impiety which had been so harshly and unfeelingly urged, he wished that *this* testimony might be recorded, to show that he *had* unwavering confidence in God. He wished this

eternal record to be made, to show that he was not a rejecter of truth; that he was not an enemy of God; that he had a firm confidence that God would yet come forth to vindicate him, and would stand up as his friend. It was a testimony worthy of being held in everlasting remembrance, and one which has had, and will have, a permanency much greater than he anticipated. ¶ *That my redeemer.* This important word has been variously translated. Rosenmüller and Schultens render it, *vindicem*; Dr. Good, *Redeemer*; Noyes and Wemyss, *vindicator*; Herder, *avenger*; Luther, Erlöser—*Redeemer*; Chaldee and Syriac, *Redeemer*. The Hebrew word, *gôël*, is from *gââl*, to redeem, to ransom. It is applied to the redemption of a farm sold, by paying back the price, Lev. xxv. 25; Ruth iv. 4, 6; to anything consecrated to God that is redeemed by paying its value, Lev. xxvii. 13, and to a slave that is ransomed, Lev. xxv. 48, 49. The word *gôël*, is applied to one who redeems a field, Lev. xxv. 26; and is often applied to God, who had redeemed his people from bondage, Ex. vi. 6; Isa. xliii. 1. See Notes on Isa. xliii. 1; and on the general meaning of the word, see Notes on Job iii. 5. Among the Hebrews, the *gôël*, occupied an important place, as a *blood avenger*, or a vindicator of violated rights. See Numb. xxxv. 12, 19, 21, 24, 25, 27; Deut. xix. 6—12; Ruth iv. 1, 6, 8; Josh. xx. 3. The word *gôël*, is rendered *kinsman*, Ruth iv. 1, 3, 6, 8; *near kinsman*, Ruth iii. 9, 12; *avenger*, Num. xxxv. 12; Josh. xx. 3; *Redeemer*, Job xix. 25; Ps. xix. 14; Isa. xlvii. 4; lxiii. 16; xlv. 24; xlviii. 17; liv. 8; xli. 14; xlix. 26; lx. 16; *him*, Lev. xxv. 25, et al. Moses found the office of the *gôël*, or *avenger*, already instituted, (see Michaelis's Commentary on Laws of Moses, § cxxxvi.) and he adopted it into his code of laws. It would seem, therefore, not improbable, that it prevailed in the adjacent countries in the time of Job, or that there may have been a reference to this office in the place before us. The *gôël* is first in-

troduced in the laws of Moses, as having a right to redeem a mortgaged field, Lev. xxv. 25, 26; and then as having a right, as kinsman, to the restoration of anything which had been iniquitously acquired, Num. v. 8. Then he is often referred to in the writings of Moses as the blood-avenger, or the kinsman of one who was slain, who would have a right to pursue the murderer, and to take vengeance on him, and whose duty it would be to do it. This right of a near relative to pursue a murderer, and to take vengeance, seems to have been one that was early conceded everywhere. It was so understood among the American Indians, and probably prevails in all countries before there are settled laws for the trial and punishment of the guilty. It was a right, however, which was liable to great abuse. Passion would take the place of reason, the innocent would be suspected, and the man who had slain another in self-defence was as likely to be pursued and slain as he who had been guilty of wilful murder. To guard against this, in the unsettled state of jurisprudence, Moses appointed cities of refuge, where the man-slayer might flee until he could have a fair opportunity of trial. It was impossible to put an end at once to the office of the *gôël*. The kinsman, the near relative, would feel himself called on to pursue the murderer; but the man-slayer might flee into a sacred city, and remain until he had a fair trial. See Num. xxxv.; Deut. xix. 6, 7. It was a humane arrangement to appoint cities of refuge, where the man who had slain another might be secure until he had an opportunity of trial—an arrangement which eminently showed the wisdom of Moses. On the rights and duties of the *gôël*, the reader may consult Michaelis's Com. on the Laws of Moses, art. 136, 137. His essential office was that of a *vindicator*—one who took up the cause of a friend, whether that friend was murdered, or was oppressed, or was wronged in any way. Usually, perhaps always, this pertained to the nearest male kin, and was instituted for the aid of the defenceless and the wronged. In times long subsequent, a somewhat similar feeling

gave rise to the institution of chivalry, and the voluntary defence of the innocent and oppressed. It cannot now be determined whether Job in this passage has reference to the office of the *goël*, as it was afterwards understood, or whether it existed in his time. It seems probable that the office would exist at the earliest periods of the world, and that in the rudest stages of society the nearest of kin would feel himself called on to vindicate the wrong done to one of the feeble members of his family. The word properly denotes, therefore, either *vindicator*, or *redeemer*; and so far as the *term* is concerned, it may refer either to God as an avenger of the innocent, or to the future Redeemer—the Messiah. The meaning of this word would be met, should it be understood as referring to God, coming forth in a public manner to vindicate the cause of Job against all the charges and accusations of his professed friends; or to God, who would appear as his vindicator at the resurrection; or to the future Messiah—the Redeemer of the body and the soul. No argument in favor of either of these interpretations can be derived from the use of the word. ¶ *Liveth*. Is alive—יָחַי. Sept., *immortal*—ἀένναος. He seems now to have forsaken me as if he were dead, but my faith is unwavering in him as a *living* vindicator. A similar expression occurs in ch. xvi. 19, "My witness is in heaven, and my record is on high." It is a declaration of entire confidence in God, and will beautifully convey the emotions of the sincere believer in all ages. He may be afflicted with disease, or the loss of property, or be forsaken by his friends, or persecuted by his foes, but if he can look up to heaven and say, "I know that my Redeemer *lives*," he will have peace. ¶ *And that he shall stand*. He will stand up, as one does who undertakes the cause of another. Jerome has rendered this as though it referred to Job, "And in the last day I shall rise from the earth"—*de terra surrecturus sum*—as if it referred to the resurrection of the body. But this is not in accordance with the Hebrew, (עָמַד)—"he shall stand." There is clearly no neces-

sary reference in *this* word to the resurrection. The simple meaning is, "he shall appear, or manifest himself, as the vindicator of my cause." ¶ *At the latter day*. The word "day" here is supplied by the translators. The Hebrew is אַחֲרָיִם, —and after, afterwards, hereafter, at length. The word literally means, hinder, hinder part—opposite to foremost, former. It is applied to the Mediterranean Sea, as being behind when the eye of the geographer was supposed to be turned to the East; (see Notes on ch. xviii. 20;) then it means after, later, applied to a generation or age. Ps. xlviii. 14, to a day—to future times—(יּוֹם אַחֲרָיִם), Prov. xxxi. 25; Isa. xxx. 8. All that this word necessarily expresses here is, that at some future period this would occur. It does not determine *when* it would be. The language would apply to any future time, and might refer to the coming of the Redeemer, to the resurrection, or to some subsequent period in the life of Job. The meaning is, that however long he was to suffer, however protracted his calamities were, and were likely to be, he had the utmost confidence that God would at length, or at some future time, come forth to vindicate him. The phrase, "the latter day," has now acquired a kind of technical meaning, by which we naturally refer it to the day of judgment. But there is no evidence that it has any such reference here. On the general meaning of phrases of this kind, however, the reader may consult my Notes on Isaiah, ch. ii. 2. *Upon the earth*. Heb., עַל-פָּנֵי, —upon the dust. Why the word *dust* is used instead of (אֲרֶץ) *earth*, is unknown. It may be because the word *dust* is emphatic, as being contrasted with heaven, the residence of the Deity. *Noyes*. What kind of an appearance God would assume when he should thus come forth, or how he would manifest himself as the vindicator and Redeemer of Job, he does not intimate, and conjecture would be useless. The words do not necessarily imply any visible manifestation—though such a manifestation would not be forbidden

26 And <sup>1</sup> *though* after my skin

<sup>1</sup> or, *after I shall awake, though this body be destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God.*

by the fair construction of the passage. I say, they do not necessarily imply it, See Psalm xii. 5, "For the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, (Heb., *stand up*—קָמָה,) saith the Lord." Ps.

xliv. 26, "Arise, (Heb. קָמָה—*stand up*,) for our help." Whether this refers to any *visible* manifestation in behalf of Job is to be determined in other modes than by the mere meaning of this word.

26. *And though.* Marg., or, *after I shall awake, though this body be destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God.* This verse has given not less perplexity than the preceding. Noyes renders it,

"And though with this skin this body be wasted away,  
Yet in my flesh shall I see God."

Dr. Good renders it,

"And, after the DISEASE hath destroyed my skin,

That in my flesh I shall see God."

Rosenmüller explains it, "And when after my skin (*scil.* is consumed and destroyed) they consume (*scil.* those corroding, or consuming, *i. e.* it is corroded, or broken into fragments) *this*, that is, this structure of my bones—my body (which he does not mention, because it was so wasted away that it did not deserve to be called a body)—yet without my flesh—with my whole body consumed, shall I see God." He translates it,

\* Et quum post cutem meam hoc fuerit consumptum,

Tamen absque carne mea videbo Deum."

The Hebrew is literally, "and after my skin." Gesenius translates it, "After they shall have destroyed my skin, this shall happen—that I will see God." Herder renders it,

"Though they tear and devour this my skin,  
Yet in my living body shall I see God."

The fair and obvious meaning, I think, is that which is conveyed by our translation. Disease had attacked his skin. It was covered with ulcers, and was fast consuming. Comp. ch. ii. 8; vii. 5. This process of corruption and decay

worms destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh <sup>2</sup> shall I see <sup>3</sup> God:

g 1 Co. 15. 53.

h 1 Jno. 3. 2.

he had reason to expect would go on until all would be consumed. But if it did, he would hold fast his confidence in God. He would believe that he would come forth as his vindicator, and he would still put his trust in him.

¶ Worms. This word is supplied by our translators. There is not a semblance of it in the original. That is, simply, "they destroy;" where the verb is used impersonally, meaning that it would be destroyed. The *agent* by which this would be done is not specified. The word rendered "destroy"

(שָׁחַת, from חָקַץ) means to cut, to strike, to cut down (comp. Notes on ch. i. 5, for the general meaning of the word), and here means *to destroy*; that is, that the work of destruction might go on until the frame should be wholly wasted away. It is not quite certain that the word here would convey the idea that he expected to *die*. It *may* mean that he would become entirely emaciated, and all his flesh be gone. There is nothing, however, in the word to show that he did not expect to die—and, perhaps, that would be the most obvious and proper interpretation.

¶ *This body.* The word *body* is also supplied by the translators. The Hebrew is simply נֶפֶשׁ—*this*. Perhaps he pointed to his body—for there can be no doubt that his body or flesh is intended. Rosenmüller supposes that he did not mention it, because it was so emaciated that it did not deserve to be called a body. ¶ *Yet in my flesh.* Heb., "From my flesh;"—נֶפֶשׁ. Herder renders this, "In my living body." Rosenmüller, *absque carne mea*—"without my flesh;" and explains it as meaning, "my whole body being consumed, I shall see God." The literal meaning is, "from, or out of, my flesh shall I see God." It does not mean *in* his flesh, which would have been expressed by the preposition בְּ, but there is the notion that *from* or *out* of his flesh he would see him; that is, clearly, as Rosenmüller has expressed

27 Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold,

and not <sup>1</sup> another; *though* <sup>2</sup> my reins be consumed <sup>3</sup> within me.

<sup>1</sup> a stranger. <sup>2</sup> or, my reins within me are consumed with earnest desire for that day. <sup>3</sup> in my bosom.

it, though my body be consumed, and I have no flesh, I shall see him. Disease might carry its fearful ravages through all his frame, until it utterly wasted away, yet he had confidence that he would see his Vindicator and Redeemer on the earth. It cannot be proved that this refers to the resurrection of that body, and, indeed, the natural interpretation is against it. It is, rather, that though without a body, or though his body should all waste away, he would see God as his vindicator. He would not always be left overwhelmed in this manner with calamities and reproaches. He would be permitted to see God coming forth as his Goël or Avenger, and manifesting himself as his friend. Calmly, therefore, he would bear these reproaches and trials, and see his frame waste away, for it would not always be so—God would yet undertake and vindicate his cause. ¶ *Shall I see God.* He would be permitted to behold him as his friend and avenger. What was the nature of the vision which he anticipated, it is not possible to determine with certainty. If he expected that God would appear in some remarkable manner to judge the world, and to vindicate the cause of the oppressed; or that he would come forth in a special manner to vindicate his cause; or if he looked to a general resurrection, and to the trial on that day, the language would apply to either of these events.

27. Whom I shall see for myself. It will not come to me by mere report. I shall not merely hear of the decision of God in my favor, but I shall myself behold him. He will at length come forth, and I shall be permitted to see him, and shall have the delightful assurance that he settles this controversy in my favor, and declares that I am his friend. Job was thus permitted to see God, (ch. xlii. 5,) and hear his voice in his favor. He spake to him from the whirlwind, (ch. xxxviii. 1,) and pronounced the sentence in his favor which

he had desired. ¶ *And not another.* Marg., a stranger. So in the Hebrew. The meaning is, that his own eyes would be permitted to see him. He would have the satisfaction of seeing God himself, and of hearing the sentence in his favor. That expectation he deemed worthy of a permanent record, and wished it transmitted to future times, that in his darkest days and severest trials—when God overwhelmed him, and man forsook him, he still firmly maintained his confidence in God, and his belief that he would come forth to vindicate his cause. ¶ *Though my reins.* The margin renders this, “my reins within me are consumed with earnest desire for that day.” Noyes translates it, “For this my soul panteth within me.” Herder,

“I shall see him as my deliverer,  
Mine eyes shall behold him, as mine,  
For whom my heart so long fainted.”

So Wemyss, “My reins faint with desire of his arrival.” Jerome renders it (*Vulgate*), *reposita est hæc spes mea in sinu meo*—“this, my hope, is laid up in my bosom.” The LXX, “All which things have been done—*συντελεσται*—in my bosom,” but what they understood by this it is difficult to say. The word rendered *reins* (רִיִּים, or, in the plural, רֵיִם, in which form only it is found,) means, properly, the reins, or the kidneys, (Job xvi. 13,) and then comes to denote the inward parts, and then the seat of the desires and affections, because in strong emotions the inward parts are affected. We speak of the heart as the seat of the affections, but with no more propriety than the Hebrews did of the upper viscera in general, or of the reins. In the Scriptures the heart and the reins are united as the seat of the affections. Thus, Jer. xi. 20, God “trieth the reins and the heart.” Jer. xvii. 10; xx. 12; Ps. vii. 9. I see no reason why the word here may not be used to denote the vis-

*cera* in general, and that the idea may be, that he felt that his disease was invading the seat of life, and his body, in all its parts, was wasting away. Our word *vitals*, perhaps, expresses the idea. ¶ *Be consumed.* Gesenius renders this, "Pine away." So Noyes, Wemyss, and some others. But the proper meaning of the word is, to consume, to be wasted, to be destroyed. The word (נִיחַ) strictly means, to finish, complete, render entire; and thence has the notion of *completion* or *finishing*—whether by making a thing perfect, or by destroying it. It is used with reference to the *eyes* that fail or waste away with weeping, Lam. ii. 11, or to the spirit or heart as fainting with grief and sorrow. Ps. lxxxiv. 3; cxliii. 7; lxix. 4. It is used often in the sense of *destroying*. Jer. xvi. 4; Ezra ix. 14; Ps. xxxix. 11; Isa. xxvii. 10; xlix. 4; Gen. xli. 30; Jer. xiv. 12, *et sepe al.* This, I think, is the meaning here. Job affirms that his whole frame, external and internal, was wasting away, yet he had confidence that he would see God. ¶ *Within me.* Marg., in my bosom. So the Hebrew. The word *bosom* is here used as we use the word *chest*—and is not improperly rendered "within me." In view of this exposition of the words, I would translate the whole passage as follows:

"For I know that my Avenger liveth,  
And that hereafter he shall stand upon the earth;  
And though after my skin this [flesh] shall be destroyed,  
Yet even without my flesh shall I see God:  
Whom I shall see for myself,  
And mine eyes shall behold, and not another,  
Though my vitals are wasting away within me."

It has already been observed, that very various views have been entertained of this important passage of Scripture. The great question has been, whether it refers to the Messiah, and to the resurrection of the dead, or to an expectation which Job had, that God would come forth as his vindicator in some such way as he is declared afterwards to have done. It may be proper, therefore, to give a summary of the arguments by which these opinions would be defended. I have not found many arguments stated for the former

opinion, though the belief is held by many, but they would be probably such as the following:—

I. Arguments which would be adduced to show that the passage refers to the Messiah and to the future resurrection of the dead. (1.) The *language* which is used is such as would appropriately describe such events. This is undoubted, though more so in our translation than in the original; but the original would appropriately express such an expectation. (2.) The impression which it would make on the mass of readers, and particularly those of plain, sober sense, who had no theory to defend. It is probably a fact, that the great body of the readers of the Bible suppose that it has such a reference. It is usually a very strong presumptive proof of the correctness of an interpretation of Scripture when this can be alleged in its favor, though it is not an infallible guide. (3.) The probability that some knowledge of the Messiah would prevail in Arabia in the time of Job. This must be admitted, though it cannot be certainly demonstrated. Comp. Num. xxiv. 17. The amount of this is, that it could not be regarded as so improbable that any such knowledge would prevail as to demonstrate certainly that this could not be referred to the Messiah. (4.) The probability that there would be found in this book some allusion to the Redeemer—the great hope of the ancient saints, and the burden of the Old Testament. But this is not conclusive, or very weighty, for there are several of the books of the Old Testament which contain no distinct allusion to him. (5.) The pertinency of such a view to the case, and its adaptedness to give to Job the kind of consolation which he needed. There can be no doubt of the truth of this; but the question is, not what *would* have imparted consolation, but what *knowledge* he actually had. There are many of the doctrines of the Christian religion which would have been eminently fitted to give comfort in such circumstances to a man in affliction, which it would be exceedingly unreasonable to expect to find in the book of Job, and which it is certain were wholly unknown to him

and his friends. (6.) The importance which he himself attached to his declaration, and the solemnity of the manner in which he introduced it. His profession of faith on the subject he wished to have engraved in the eternal rocks. He wished it transmitted to future times. He wished a permanent record to be made, that succeeding ages might read it, and see the ground of his confidence and his hope. This, to my mind, is the strongest argument which has occurred in favor of the opinion that the passage refers to the Redeemer and to the resurrection. These are all the considerations which have occurred to me, or which I have found stated, which would go to sustain the position that the passage referred to the resurrection. Some of them have weight; but the prevailing opinion, that the passage has such a reference, will be found to be sustained, probably more by the *feelings of piety* than by solid argument and sound exegesis. It is favored, doubtless, by our common version, and there can be no doubt that the translators supposed that it had such a reference.

II. On the other hand, weighty considerations are urged to show that the passage does not refer to the Messiah, and to the resurrection of the dead. They are such as the following:—

(1.) The language, fairly interpreted and translated, does not necessarily imply this. It is admitted that our translators had this belief, and without doing intentional or actual violence to the passage, or designing to make a forced translation, they have allowed their feelings to give a complexion to their language which the original does not necessarily convey. Hence the word "Redeemer," which is now used technically to denote the Messiah, is employed, though the original *may*, and commonly *does*, have a much more general signification; and hence the phrase, "at the latter day," also a technical phrase, occurs, though the original means no more than *afterwards*, or *after this*; and hence they have employed the phrase, "in my flesh," though the original means no more than "though my flesh be all wasted away." The following I believe to express fairly the

meaning of the Hebrew: "I know that my deliverer, or avenger, lives, and that he will yet appear in some public manner on the earth; and though, after the destruction of my skin, the process of corruption shall go on till *all* my flesh shall be destroyed, yet when my flesh is entirely wasted away, I shall see God; I shall have the happiness of seeing him for myself, and beholding him with my own eyes, even though my very vitals shall be consumed. He will come and vindicate me and my cause. I have such confidence in his justice, that I do not doubt that he will yet show himself to be the friend of him who puts his trust in him."

(2.) It is inconsistent with the argument, and the whole scope and connexion of the book, to suppose that this refers to the Messiah and to the resurrection of the body after death. The book of Job is strictly an *argument*—a train of clear, consecutive reasoning. It discusses a great inquiry about the doctrines of Divine Providence, and the Divine dealings with men. The three friends of Job maintained that God deals with men strictly according to their character in this life—that eminent wickedness is attended with eminent suffering; and that when men experience any great calamity, it is proof of eminent wickedness. All this they meant to apply to Job, and all this Job denied. Yet he was perplexed and confounded. He did not know what to do with the *facts* in the case; but still he felt embarrassed. All that he could say was, that God would *yet* come forth, and show himself to be the friend of those who loved him, and that though they suffered now, yet he had confidence that he would appear for their relief. Now, had they possessed the knowledge of the doctrine of the *resurrection of the dead*, it would have ended the whole debate. It would not only have met all the difficulties of Job, but we should have found him perpetually recurring to it—placing it in every variety of form—appealing to it as relieving his embarrassments, and as demanding an answer from his friends. But, on the supposition that this refers to the resurrection, it is remarkable that the passage here stands alone. Job



never adverted to it before, but allowed himself to be greatly embarrassed for the want of just such an argument, and he never refers to it again. He goes on to argue again *as if* he believed no such doctrine. He does not ask his friends to notice this; he expresses no surprise that they should pass by in entire neglect an argument which *must have been seen* to be decisive of the controversy. It is equally unaccountable that his friends should not have noticed it. If the doctrine of the resurrection was true, it settled the case. It rendered all their arguments worthless, and would have met the case just as we meet similar cases now. It was incumbent on them to show that there was no evidence of the truth of any such doctrine as the resurrection, and that this could not be urged to meet their arguments. Yet they never allude to so important and unanswerable an argument, and evidently did not suppose that Job referred to any such event. It is equally remarkable, that neither Elihu nor God himself, in the close of the book, makes any such allusion, or refers to the doctrine of the resurrection at all, as meeting the difficulties of the case. In the argument with which the Almighty is represented as closing the book, the whole thing is resolved into a matter of *sovereignty*, and men are required to submit because God is great, and is inscrutable in his ways—not because the dead will be raised, and the inequalities of the present life will be recompensed in a future state. The doctrine of a *resurrection*—a great and glorious doctrine, such as, if once suggested, could not have escaped the profound attention of these sages—would have solved the whole difficulty; and yet, confessedly, it is never alluded to by them—never introduced—never examined—never admitted or rejected—never becomes a matter of inquiry, and is never referred to by God himself as settling the matter—never occurs in the book in any form, unless it be in this. This is wholly unaccountable on the supposition that this refers to the resurrection.

(3.) The interpretation which refers this to the resurrection of the dead is inconsistent with numerous passages

where Job expresses a contrary belief. Of this nature are the following: ch. vii. 9, "As the cloud is consumed, and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more;" vii. 21, "I shall sleep in the dust—thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be." See ch. x. 21, 22, "I go whence I shall not return—to the land of darkness, and the shadow of death; a land of darkness as darkness itself." Ch. xiv. throughout, particularly vs. 7, 9, 11, 12, "For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. But man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up, so man lieth down and riseth not—till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." Ch. xvi. 22, "When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return." These passages all imply that when he should die, he would not appear again on the earth. This is not such language as one would use who believed in the resurrection of the dead. It is true, that in the discourses of Job, various and sometimes apparently contradictory feelings are expressed. He was a severe sufferer; and under strong conflicting emotions, he sometimes expressed himself in a manner which he at other times regrets, and gives vent to feelings which, on mature reflection, he confesses to have been wrong. But how is it *possible* to believe that a man, in his circumstances, would ever deny the doctrine of the resurrection if he held it? How could he forget it? How could he throw out a remark that *seemed* to imply a doubt of it? If he had known of this, it would have been a sheet-anchor to his soul in all the storms of adversity—an unanswerable argument to all that his friends advanced—a topic of consolation which he could never have lost sight of, much less denied. He would have clung to that hope as the refuge of his soul, and not for one moment would he have denied it, or expressed a doubt of its truth.

(4.) I may urge as a distinct argument

what has before been hinted at, that this is not referred to as a topic of consolation by either of the friends of Job, by Elihu, or by God himself. Had it been a doctrine of those times, his friends would have understood it, and it would have reversed all their theology. Had it been understood by Elihu, he would have urged it as a reason for resignation in affliction. Had God designed that it should be known in that age, no more favorable opportunity could be conceived for the purpose than at the end of the arguments in this book. What a flood of light would it have thrown on the design of afflictions! How effectually would it have rebuked the arguments of the friends of Job! And how clear is it, therefore, that God did not *intend* that it should then be revealed to man, but meant that it should be reserved for a more advanced state of the world, and particularly that it should be reserved as the grand doctrine of the Christian revelation.

(5.) A fifth consideration is, that on the supposition that it refers to the resurrection, it would be inconsistent with the views which prevailed in the age when Job is supposed to have lived. It is wholly in advance of that age. It makes little difference in regard to this whether we suppose him to have lived in the time of Abraham, Jacob, or Moses, or even at a later period—such a supposition would be equally at variance with the revelations which had then been given. The clear doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is one of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity

one of the last truths of revelation, and is one of the glorious truths which seem to have been reserved for the Redeemer himself to make known to man. There are, indeed, obscure traces of it in the Old Testament. Occasionally we met with a hint on the subject that was sufficient to excite the hopes of the ancient saints, and to lead them to suppose that more glorious truths were in reserve to be communicated by the Messiah. But those hints occur at distant intervals; are obscure in their character; and perhaps if all in the Old Testament were collected, they would not be sufficient to convey any very

intelligible view of the resurrection of the dead. But on the supposition that the passage before us refers to that doctrine, we have here one of the most clear and full revelations on the subject, laid far back in the early ages of the world, originating in Arabia, and entirely in advance of the prevailing views of the age, and of all that had been communicated by the Spirit of inspiration to the generations then living. It is admitted, indeed, that it was *possible* for the Holy Spirit to communicate that truth in its fulness and completeness to an Arabian sage; but it is not the way in which revelation, in other respects, has been imparted. It has been done *gradually*. Obscure intimations are given at first—they are increased from time to time—the light becomes clearer, till some prophet discloses the whole truth, and the doctrine stands complete before us. Such a course we should expect to find in regard to the doctrine of the resurrection, and such is exactly the course pursued, unless *this* passage teaches what was, in fact, the highest revelation made by the Messiah.

(6.) All which the words and phrases fairly convey, and all which the argument demands, is fully met by the supposition that it refers to some such event as is recorded in the close of the book. God appeared in a manner corresponding to the meaning of the words, here upon the earth. He came as the Vindicator, the Redeemer, the *Goël* of Job. He vindicated his cause, rebuked his friends, expressed his approbation of the sentiments of Job, and blessed him again with returning prosperity and plenty. The disease of the patriarch may have advanced, as he supposed it would. His flesh may have wasted away, but his confidence in God was not misplaced, and he came forth as his vindicator and friend. It was a noble expression of faith on the part of Job; it showed that he *had* confidence in God, and that in the midst of his trials he truly relied on him; and it was a sentiment worthy to be engraved in the eternal rock, and to be transmitted to future times. It was an invaluable lesson to sufferers, showing them that confidence could and should be placed

28 But ye should say, Why persecute we him, <sup>1</sup> seeing the

<sup>1</sup> or, and what root of matter is found in me?

in God in the severest trials. So far as I can see, all that is fairly implied in the passage, when properly interpreted, is fully met by the events recorded in the close of the book. Such an interpretation meets the exigency of the case, accords with the strain of the argument and with the result, and is the most simple and natural that has been proposed. These considerations are so weighty in my mind, that they have conducted me to a conclusion, contrary, I confess, to what I had hoped to have reached, that this passage has no reference to the Messiah and the doctrine of the resurrection. We do not need it—for all the truths respecting the Messiah and the resurrection which we need, are fully revealed elsewhere; and though this is an exquisitely beautiful passage, and piety would love to retain the belief that it refers to the resurrection of the dead, yet *truth* is to be preferred to indulgence of the wishes and desires of the heart, however amiable or pious, and the *desire* to find certain doctrines in the Bible should yield to what we are constrained to believe the Spirit of inspiration actually taught. I confess that I have never been so pained at any conclusion to which I have come in the interpretation of the Bible as in the case before us. I would like to have found a distinct prophecy of the Messiah in this ancient and venerable book. I would like to have found the faith of this eminent saint sustained by such a faith in his future advent and incarnation. I would like to have found evidence that this expectation had become incorporated in the piety of the early nations, and was found in Arabia. I would like to have found traces of the early belief of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead sustaining the souls of the patriarchs then, as it does ours now, in trial. But I cannot. Yet I can regard it as a most beautiful and triumphant expression of confidence in God, and as wholly worthy to be engraved, as Job desired it might be, in the solid rock for ever, that the passing

root of the matter is found in me?

traveller might see and read it; or as worthy of that more permanent record which it has received by being "*printed in a book*"—by an art unknown then, and sent down to the end of the world to be read and admired in all generations.

The opinion which has now been expressed, it is not necessary to say, has been held by a large number of the most distinguished critics. Grotius says that the Jews never applied it to the Messiah and the resurrection. The same opinion is held by Grotius himself, by Warburton, Rosenmüller, Le Clerc, Patrick, Kennicott, Dathe, and Jahn. Calvin seems to be doubtful—sometimes giving it an interpretation similar to that suggested above, and then pursuing his remarks as if it referred to the Messiah. Most of the fathers, and a large portion of modern critics, it is to be admitted, suppose that it refers to the Messiah, and to the future resurrection.

28. *But ye should say.* Noyes renders this, "Since ye say, 'How may we persecute him, and find grounds of accusation against him?'" Dr. Good,

"Then shall ye say, 'How did we persecute him?'"

When the root of the matter is disclosed in me."

The Vulgate, "Why now do ye say, Let us persecute him, and find ground of accusation — *radicem verbi* — against him?" The LXX, "If you also say, What shall we say against him? and what ground of accusation — *ῥίζαν λόγου*—shall we find in him?" Rosenmüller renders it, "When you say, Let us persecute him, and see what ground of accusation we can find in him, then fear the sword." Most critics concur in such an interpretation as implies that they had sought a ground of accusation against him, and that they would have occasion to fear the divine displeasure on account of it. It seems to me, however, that our translators have given substantially the fair sense of the Hebrew. A slight variation would, perhaps, better express the idea: "For you

29 Be ye afraid of the sword: for wrath *bringeth* the punishments of the sword, that ye may know *there is* a judgment.

† Ps. 58. 10, 11.

will yet say, Why did we persecute him? The root of the matter was found in him—and since this will be the case, fear now that justice will overtake you for it, for vengeance will not always slumber when a friend of God is wronged.” ¶ *Seeing the root of the matter.* Marg., and what root of matter is found in me. The word rendered matter (מַדְּרֵךְ) means, properly, word or thing—and may refer to any thing. Here it is used in one of the two opposite senses, piety or guilt—as being the thing under consideration. The interpretation to be adopted must depend on the view taken of the other words of the sentence. To me it seems that it denotes piety, and that the idea is, that the root of true piety was in him, or that he was not a hypocrite. The word root is so common as to need no explanation. It is used sometimes to denote the bottom, or the lowest part of anything—as, e. g., the foot (see ch. xiii. 27, margin), the bottom of the mountains (Job xxviii. 9), or of the sea, Job xxxvi. 30, margin. Here it means the foundation, support, or source—as the root is of a tree; and the sense, I suppose, is, that he was not a dead trunk, but he was like a tree that had a root, and consequently support and life. Many critics, however, among whom is Gesenius, suppose that it means that the root of the controversy—that is, the ground of strife, was in him, or that he was the cause of the whole dispute.

29. Be ye afraid of the sword. Of

the sword of justice, of the wrath of God. In taking such views, and using such language, you ought to dread the vengeance of God, for he will punish the guilty. ¶ *For wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword.* The word “bringeth” is supplied by the translators, and, as it seems to me, improperly. The idea is, that wrath or anger, such as they had manifested, was proper for punishment; that such malice as they had shown was a crime that God would not suffer to escape unpunished. They had, therefore, everything to dread. Literally it is, “for wrath the iniquities of the sword;” that is, wrath is a crime for the sword. ¶ *That ye may know there is a judgment.* That there is justice; that God punishes injuries done to the character, and that he will come forth to vindicate his friends. Probably Job anticipated that when God should come forth to vindicate him, he would inflict exemplary punishment on them; and that this would be not only by words, but by some heavy judgment, such as he had himself experienced. The vindication of the just is commonly attended with the punishment of the unjust; the salvation of the friends of God is connected with the destruction of his foes. Job seems to have anticipated this in the case of himself and his friends; it will certainly occur in the great day when the affairs of this world shall be wound up in the decisions of the final judgment. See Matt. xxv.

## CHAPTER XX.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

ZOPHAR, the third of the friends of Job, replies. He is not moved to compassion by the tender appeals of Job in the previous chapter, but seems rather provoked and urged on by the solemn warning with which Job concluded his discourse. He begins (vs. 1—3) by stating the reasons which induced him to reply at all, the principal of which was, the injurious reproach and threat with which Job had concluded his speech, and then proceeds with the main topic of the argument, that calamity must be, and always had been, the lot of the wicked, vs. 4—22.

He says, that it had been the settled course of events from the beginning of the world that the triumphing of the wicked would be short, and then proceeds to show this by striking images and examples. The point of his remarks is, that it was no matter how high a wicked man was exalted, he would be suddenly brought low; no matter what comforts he drew around him, they would be suddenly stripped away; no matter how much he obtained by oppression and fraud, he would not be permitted to enjoy it; and no matter how much he endeavoured to conceal his guilt, the heavens would reveal it, and would show his true character to the world. All this he doubtless intended should be applied to Job, and the application was so obvious to the circumstances of the case, that it could not fail to be made. The speech is remarkable for severity, and remarkable because it does not notice the solemn profession of confidence in God which Job had made in the previous chapter (vs. 25—27), further than that it is implied all along in this speech that his belief was, that the wicked, once cast down, would not be restored. Had the solemn profession of Job there referred to the Messiah and the resurrection, it is hardly conceivable that it should not have been noticed in this reply. It is, indeed, remarkable, on any supposition, that he did not refer to it, or that even Job did not refer to it again.

**T**HEN answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,

2 Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer, and for *this*

<sup>1</sup> I make haste.

<sup>1</sup> *my haste is in me.*

2. *Therefore.* נָקַן. In view of what has been just said. Or perhaps the word means merely *certainly, truly*. ¶ *Do my thoughts cause me to answer.* This is variously rendered. The Vulgate renders it, Idcirco cogitationes meae variæ succedunt sibi, et mens in diversa rapitur—"Therefore my various thoughts follow on in succession, and the mind is distracted." The LXX, "I did not suppose that thou wouldst speak against these things, and you do not understand more than I." How this was ever made from the Hebrew it is impossible to say. On the word *thoughts*, see Notes on ch. iv. 13. The word denotes thoughts which divide and distract the mind; not calm and collected reflections, but those which disturb, disconcert, and trouble. He acknowledges that it was not calm reflection which induced him to reply, but the agitating emotions produced by the speech of Job. The word rendered "cause me to answer" (נִשְׁבַּח) means "cause me to return"—and Jerome understood it as meaning that his thoughts returned upon him in quick and troublesome succession, and says, in his Commentary on Job, that the meaning is, "I am troubled and agitated because you say that you sustain these evils from God without cause, when nothing evil ought to be suspected of God."

3 I have heard the check of my reproach, and the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer.

¶ *And for this I make haste.* Marg., *my haste is in me.* The meaning is, "the impetuosity of my feelings urges me on. I reply on account of the agitation of my soul, which will admit of no delay." His heart was full, and he hastened to give vent to his feelings in impassioned and earnest language.

3. *I have heard the check of my reproach.* I have heard your violent and severe language reproaching us. Probably he refers to what Job had said in the close of his speech (ch. xix. 29), that they had occasion to dread the wrath of God, and that they might anticipate heavy judgments as the result of their opinions. Or it may be, as Schultens supposes, that he refers to what Job said in ch. xix. 2, and the rebuke that he had administered there. Or possibly, and still more probably, I think, he may refer to what Job had said in reply to the former speech of Zophar (ch. xii. 2), where he tauntingly says that "they were the people, and that wisdom would die with them." The Hebrew literally is, "the correction of my shame" (מִסֵּר כִּלְמוֹתַי)—that is, the castigation or rebuke which tends to cover me with ignominy. The sense is, "you have accused me of that which is ignominious and shameful, and under the impetuous feelings caused by such

4 Knowest thou *not* this of old, since man was placed upon earth,

5 That the triumphing of the

a charge, I cannot refrain from replying." ¶ *And the spirit of my understanding.* Meaning, perhaps, "the emotion of his mind." The word *mind* or *soul* would better express the idea than the word *understanding*; and the word *spirit* here seems to be used in the sense of violent or agitating emotions—perhaps in allusion to the primary signification of the word (רוח) *wind*.

4. *Knowest thou not this of old.* That is, dost thou not know that this has always happened from the beginning of the world, or that this is the invariable course of events? His purpose is to show that it was the settled arrangement of Providence that the wicked would be overtaken with signal calamity. It was so settled that Job ought not to be surprised that it had occurred in *his* case. Zophar goes on to show that though a wicked man might rise high in honor, and obtain great wealth, yet that the fall would certainly come, and he would sink to a depth of degradation corresponding to the former prosperity. ¶ *Since man was placed upon earth.* Since the creation; that is, it has always been so.

5. *That the triumphing.* The word "triumphing" here (נצח) means shouting, rejoicing—such a shouting as men make after a victory, or such as occurred at the close of harvesting. Here it means that the occasion which the wicked had for rejoicing would be brief. It would be but for a moment, and he then would be overwhelmed with calamity or cut off by death. ¶ *Short.* Marg., as in Heb., *from near.* That is, it would be soon over. ¶ *And the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment?* This probably means, as used by Zophar, that the happiness of a hypocrite would be brief—referring to the happiness arising from the possession of health, life, property, friends, reputation. Soon God would take away all these, and leave him to sorrow.

wicked is short,<sup>1</sup> and the joy of the hypocrite *but* for a<sup>2</sup> moment?

<sup>1</sup> *from near.*

<sup>2</sup> *Matt. 7. 21.*

This, he said, was the regular course of events as they had been observed from the earliest times. But the *language* conveys most important truths in reference to the spiritual joys of the hypocrite at all times, though it is not certain that Zophar used it in this sense. The truths are these. (1.) There is a kind of *joy* which a hypocrite may have—the counterfeit of that which a true Christian possesses. The word *hypocrite* may be used in a large sense to denote the man who is a professor of religion, but who has none, as well as him who intentionally imposes on others, and who makes pretensions to piety which he knows he has not. Such a man *may* have joy. He supposes that his sins are forgiven, and that he has a well-founded hope of eternal life. He may have been greatly distressed in view of his sin and danger, and when he supposes that his heart is changed, and that the danger is past, from the nature of the case he will have a species of enjoyment. A man is confined in a dungeon under sentence of death. A forged instrument of pardon is brought to him. He does not know that it is forged, and supposes the danger is past, and his joy will be as real as though the pardon were genuine. So with the man who *supposes* that his sins are forgiven. (2.) The joy of the self-deceiver or the hypocrite will be short. There is no genuine religion to sustain it, and it soon dies away. It may be at first very elevated, just as the joy of the man who supposed that he was pardoned would fill him with exultation. But in the case of the hypocrite it soon dies away. He has no true love to God; he has never been truly reconciled to him; he has no real faith in Christ; he has no sincere love of prayer, of the Bible, or of Christians; and soon the temporary excitement dies away, and he lives without comfort or peace. He may be a professor of reli-

6 Though <sup>b</sup> his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the <sup>1</sup> clouds;

7 Yet he shall perish for ever, like <sup>c</sup> his own dung: they which

<sup>b</sup> Is. 14. 13, 14.

<sup>1</sup> cloud.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Ki. 14. 10.

gion, but with him it is a matter of form, and he has neither love nor zeal in the cause of his professed Master. Motives of pride, or the desire of a reputation for piety, or some other selfish aim, may keep him in the church, and he lives to shed blighting on all around him. Or if, under the illusion, he should be enabled to keep up some emotions of happiness in his bosom, they must soon cease, for to the hypocrite death will soon end it all. How much does it become us, therefore, to inquire whether the peace which we seek and which we may possess in religion, is the genuine happiness which results from true reconciliation to God and a well-founded hope of salvation. Sad will be the disappointment of him who has cherished a hope of heaven through life, should he at last sink down to hell! Deep the condemnation of him who has professed to be a friend of God, and who has been at heart his bitter foe; who has endeavored to keep up the forms of religion, but who has been a stranger through life to the true peace which religion produces!

6. *Though his excellency mount up to the heavens.* Though he attain to the highest pitch of honor and prosperity. The LXX render this, "Though his gifts should go up to heaven, and his sacrifice should touch the clouds;" a sentence conveying a true and a beautiful idea, but which is not a translation of the Hebrew. The phrases, to go up to heaven, and to touch the clouds, often occur to denote anything that is greatly exalted, or that is very high. Thus in Virgil,

"It clamor coslo."

So Horace,

"Sublimi feriam sidera vertice."

And again,

"Attingit solum Jovis."

have seen him shall say, Where is he?

8 He shall fly away as a dream, <sup>d</sup> and shall not be found: yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. 83. 10.

Comp. Gen. xi. 4, "Let us build us a tower whose top may reach unto heaven." In Homer, the expression not unfrequently occurs, τοῦ γὰρ κλέος οὐρανὸν ἵκει. In Seneca (Thyest. Act. v. vs. 1, 2, 4,) similar expressions occur:

"Equalis astris gradior, et cunctos super  
Altum superbo vertice attingens polum.  
Dimitto superos: summa votorum attigi."

The language of Zophar would also well express the condition of many a hypocrite whose piety seems to be of the most exalted character, and who appears to have made most eminent attainments in religion. Such a man may seem to be a man of uncommon excellence. He may attract attention as having extraordinary sanctity. He may seem to have a remarkable spirit of prayer, and yet all may be false and hollow. Men who design to be hypocrites, aim usually to be eminent hypocrites; they who have true piety often, alas, aim at a much lower standard. A hypocrite cannot keep himself in countenance, or accomplish his purpose of imposing on the world, without the appearance of extraordinary devotedness to God; many a sincere believer is satisfied with much less of the appearance of religion. He is sincere and honest. He is conscious of true piety, and he attempts to impose on none. At the same time, he makes no attempt scarcely to be what the hypocrite wishes to appear to be; and hence the man that shall appear to be the most eminently devoted to God may be a hypocrite—yet usually not long. His zeal dies away, or he is suffered to fall into open sin, and to show that he had no true religion at heart.

8. *He shall fly away as a dream.* As a dream wholly disappears or vanishes. This comparison of man with a dream is not uncommon, and is most impressive. See Psalm lxxiii. 20. Notes on

9 The eye also *which* saw him shall see him no more; neither shall his place any more behold him.

10 His <sup>1</sup> children shall seek to

<sup>1</sup> or, the poor shall oppress his children.

Isa. xxix. 7, 8. ¶ *As a vision of the night.* As when one in a dream seems to see objects which vanish when he awakes. The parallelism requires us to understand this of what appears in a dream, and not of a spectre. In our dreams we seem to see objects, and when we awake they vanish.

9. *The eye also which saw him.* This is almost exactly the language which Job uses respecting himself. See ch. vii. 8, 10, and the Notes on those verses.

10. *His children shall seek to please the poor.* Marg., or, *the poor shall oppress his children.* The idea in the Hebrew seems to be, that his sons shall be reduced to the humiliating condition of asking the aid of the most needy and abject. Instead of being in a situation to assist others, and to indulge in a liberal hospitality, they themselves shall be reduced to the necessity of applying to the poor for the means of subsistence. There is great strength in this expression. It is usually regarded as humiliating to be compelled to ask aid at all; but the idea here is, that they would be reduced to the necessity of asking it of those who themselves needed it, or would be beggars of beggars. ¶ *And his hands shall restore their goods.* Noyes renders this, "And their hands shall give back his wealth." Rosenmüller supposes it means, "And their hands shall restore his iniquity;" that is, what their father took unjustly away. There can be but little doubt that this refers to his sons, and not to himself—though the singular suffix in the word (יָדוֹ) "*his hands*" is used. But the singular is sometimes used instead of the plural. The word rendered "*goods*" (כֶּסֶף) means *strength, power*, and then *wealth*; and the idea here is, that the hands of his sons would be compelled to give back the property which the father had un-

please the poor, and his hands shall restore their <sup>c</sup> goods.

11 His bones are full of *the sin* <sup>f</sup> of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust.

<sup>c</sup> ver 18.

<sup>f</sup> c. 13. 26.


justly acquired. Instead of retaining and enjoying it, they would be compelled to make restitution, and thus be reduced to penury and want.

11. *His bones are full of the sin of his youth.* The words "*of the sin*" in our common translation are supplied by the translators. Gesenius and Noyes suppose that the Hebrew means, "His bones are full of youth;" that is, full of vigor and strength, and the idea according to this would be, that he would be cut off in the fulness of his strength. Dr. Good renders it forcibly,

"His secret lusts shall follow his bones,

Yea, they shall press upon him in the dust."

The Vulgate renders it, "His bones are full of the sins of his youth." The LXX, "His bones are full of his youth." The Chaldee Paraphrase, "His bones are full of his strength." The Hebrew literally is, "His bones are full of his secret things" (סֵתֶרָיו), referring, as I suppose, to the secret, long-cherished faults of his life; the corrupt propensities and desires of his soul, which had been seated in his very nature, and which would adhere to him, leaving a withering influence on his whole system in advancing years. The effect is that which is so often seen, when vices corrupt the very physical frame, and where the results are seen long in future life. The effect would be seen in the diseases which they engendered in his system, and in the certainty with which they would bring him to the

grave. The Syriac renders it  —marrow, as if the idea were that he would die full of vigor and strength. But the sense is rather that his secret lusts would work his certain ruin. ¶ *Which shall lie down with him.* That is, the results of his secret sins shall lie down with him in the grave. He will never get rid of them. He has so long



12 Though wickedness be sweet <sup>g</sup> in his mouth, *though* he hide it under his tongue;

13 *Though* he spare it, and

g c. 15. 16.

indulged in his sins; they have so thoroughly pervaded his nature, and he so delights to cherish them, that they will attend him to the tomb. There is truth in this representation. Wicked men often indulge in secret sin so long that it seems to pervade the whole system. Nothing will remove it; and it lives and acts until the body is committed to the dust, and the soul sinks ruined into hell.

12. *Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth.* Though he has pleasure in committing it, as he has in pleasant food. The sense of this and the following verses is, that though a man may have pleasure in indulgence in sin, and may find happiness of a certain kind in it, yet that the consequences will be bitter—as if the food which he ate should become like gall, and he should cast it up with loathing. There are many sins which, from the laws of our nature, are attended with a kind of pleasure. Such, for illustration, are the sins of gluttony and of intemperance in drinking; the sins of ambition and vanity; the sins of amusement and of fashionable life. To such we give the name of *pleasures*. We do not speak of them as *happiness*. That is a word which would not express their nature. It denotes rather substantial, solid, permanent joy—such joy as the “pleasures of sin for a season” do not furnish. It is this temporary *pleasure* which the lovers of vanity, fashion, and dress seek, and which, it cannot be denied, they often find. As long ago as the time of Zophar, it was admitted that such pleasure might be found in some forms of sinful indulgence, and yet even in his time that was seen, which all subsequent observation has proved true, that such indulgence must lead to bitter results. ¶ *Though he hide it under his tongue.* It is from this passage, probably, that we have derived the phrase, “to roll sin as a

forsake it not; but keep it still <sup>1</sup> within his mouth :

14 *Yet* his meat in his bowels is turned, *it is* the gall of asps within him.

<sup>1</sup> in the midst of his palate.

sweet morsel under the tongue,” which is often quoted as if it were a part of Scripture. The *meaning* here is, that a man would find pleasure in sin, and would seek to prolong it, as one does the pleasure of eating that which is grateful to the palate, by holding it long in the mouth, or by placing it under the tongue.

13. *Though he spare it.* That is, though he retain it long in his mouth, that he may enjoy it the more. ¶ *And forsake it not.* Retains it as long as he can. ¶ *But keep it still within his mouth.* Marg., as in Heb., *in the midst of his palate.* He seeks to enjoy it as long as possible.

14. *Yet his meat.* His food. ¶ *In his bowels is turned.* That is, it is as if he had taken food which was exceedingly pleasant, and had retained it in his mouth as long as possible, that he might enjoy it, but when he swallowed it, it became bitter and offensive. Comp. Rev. x. 9, 10. Sin may be pleasant when it is committed, but its consequences will be bitter. ¶ *It is the gall of asps.* On the meaning of the word here rendered *asps* (ἄσπες), see Notes on Isa. xi. 8. There can be little doubt that the *asp*, or *aspic*, of antiquity, which was so celebrated, is here intended. The bite was deadly, and was regarded as incurable. The sight became immediately dim after the bite—a swelling took place, and pain was felt in the stomach, followed by stupor, convulsions, and death. It is probably the same as the *boetan* of the Arabians. It is about a foot in length, and two inches in circumference—its color being black and white. *Pict. Bib.* The word *gall* (קָרוֹחַ) means *bitterness*, *acridness* (compare Job xiii. 26); and hence bile or gall. It is not improbable that it was formerly supposed that the poison

15 He hath swallowed down iches, and he shall vomit them again: God shall cast them out of his belly.

16 He shall suck the poison <sup>h</sup>

♣ Ro. 3. 13.

of the serpent was contained in the gall, though it is now ascertained that it is found in a small sac in the mouth. It is here used as synonymous with the *poison* of asps—supposed to be *bitter* and *deadly*. The meaning is, that sin, however pleasant and grateful it may be when committed, will be as destructive to the soul as food would be to the body, which, as soon as it was swallowed, became the most deadly poison. This is a fair account still of the effects of sin.

15. *He hath swallowed down riches.* He hath *glutted* down riches—or gormandized them—or devoured them greedily. The Hebrew word *שָׂחַ* means, to absorb, to devour with the idea of greediness. It is descriptive of the voracity of a wild beast, and means here that he had devoured them eagerly, or voraciously. ♣ *And he shall vomit.* As an epicure does that which he has drunk or swallowed with delight. *Noyes.* The idea is, that he shall lose that which he has acquired, and that it will be attended with loathing. All this is to a great extent true still, and may be applied to those who aim to accumulate wealth, and to lay up ill-gotten gold. It will be ruinous to their peace; and the time will come when it will be looked on with inexpressible loathing. Zophar meant, undoubtedly, to apply this to Job, and to infer, that since it was a settled maxim that such would be the result of the ill-gotten gain of a wicked man, where a result like this *had* happened, that there must have been wickedness. How cutting and severe this must have been to Job can be easily conceived. The LXX render this, “Out of his house let an angel drag him.”

16. *He shall suck the poison of asps.* That which he swallowed as pleasant nutriment, shall become the most deadly poison; or the consequence shall be as

of asps: the viper's tongue shall slay him.

17 He shall not see the rivers, the floods, <sup>1</sup> the brooks of honey and butter.

<sup>1</sup> or, *streaming brooks.*

if he had sucked the poison of asps. It would seem that the ancients regarded the poison of the serpent as deadly, however it was taken into the system. They seem not to have been aware that the poison of a wound may be sucked out without injury to him who does it; and that it is necessary that the poison should mingle with the blood to be fatal. ♣ *The viper's tongue shall slay him.* The early impression probably was, that the injury done by a serpent was by the fiery, forked, and brandished tongue, which was supposed to be sharp and penetrating. It is now known that the injury is done by the poison ejected through a groove or orifice in one of the teeth, which is so made as to lie flat on the roof of the mouth, except when the serpent bites, when that tooth is elevated, and penetrates the flesh. The word *viper* here (*תָּנָח*) is probably the same species of serpent that is known among the Arabs by the same name still—*E! Effah*. See Notes on Isa. xxx. 6. It is the most common and venomous of the serpent tribe in Northern Africa and in South-western Asia. It is remarkable for its quick and penetrating poison. It is about two feet long, as thick as a man's arm, beautifully spotted with yellow and brown, and sprinkled over with blackish specks. They have a large mouth, by which they inhale a large quantity of air, and when inflated therewith, they eject it with such force as to be heard a considerable distance. *Jackson.* Capt. Riley, in his “Authentic Narrative,” (New York, 1817,) confirms this account. He describes the viper as the “most beautiful object in nature,” and says that the poison is so virulent as to cause death in fifteen minutes.

17. *He shall not see the rivers.* That is, he shall not be permitted to enjoy plenty and prosperity. Rivers or rills

18 That which he labored for shall he restore, and shall not swallow it down: according to <sup>1</sup> *his substance shall the restitution be, and he shall not rejoice therein.*

<sup>1</sup> *the substance of his exchange.*

of honey and butter are emblems of prosperity. Comp. Ex. iii. 17; Job xxix. 6. A land flowing with milk, honey, and butter, is, in the Scripture, the highest image of prosperity and happiness. The word rendered "rivers" (נָחַל) means, rather, *rivulets*, small streams—or brooks, such as were made by dividing a large stream (from נָחַל, to cleave, divide), and would properly be applied to canals made by separating a large stream, or dividing it into numerous water-courses for the purpose of irrigating lands. The word rendered *floods*, and in the margin, *streaming brooks* (נָחַל זָרָח), means, "the rivers of the valley," or such as flow through a valley when it is swelled by the melting of snow, or by torrents of rain. A flood, a rapid, swollen, full stream would express the idea. These were ideas of beauty and fertility among the Orientals; and where butter and honey were represented as flowing in this manner in a land, it was the highest conception of plenty. The word rendered *honey* (דְּבַשׁ) may, and commonly does, mean honey; but it also means the juice of the grape, boiled down to about the consistency of molasses, and used as an article of food. The Arabs make much use of this kind of food now, and in Syria, nearly two-thirds of the grapes are employed in preparing this article of food. It is called by the Arabs *Dibs*, which is the same as the Hebrew word used here. May not the word mean this in some of the places where it is rendered *honey* in the Scriptures? The word rendered *butter* (חֹמֶץ) probably means, usually, *curdled milk*. See Notes on Isa. vii. 15. It is not certain that the word is ever used in the Old Testament to denote *butter*. The article which is used still by the Arabs is chiefly curdled milk, and probably this is referred to here. It will illustrate this passage to remark, that the inhabi-

tants of Arabia, and of those who live in similar countries, have no idea of *butter*, as it exists among us, in a solid state. What they call *butter*, is in a fluid state, and is hence compared with flowing streams. An abundance of these articles was regarded as a high proof of prosperity, as they constitute a considerable part of the diet of Orientals. The same image, to denote plenty, is often used by the sacred writers, and by classic poets. See Isa. vii. 22:

"And it shall come to pass in that day  
That a man shall keep alive a young cow and  
two sheep,  
And it shall be that from the plenty of milk  
which they shall give, he shall eat butter.  
For butter and honey shall every one eat,  
Who is left alone in the midst of the land."

See also in Joel iii. 18:

"And it shall come to pass in that day,  
The mountains shall drop down new wine,  
And the hills shall flow with milk,  
And all the rivers of Judah shall flow with  
water."

Thus also Ovid, *Metam.* iii.

"Flumina jam lactis, jam flumina nectaris  
ibant."

Comp. Horace *Epod.* xvi. 41.

"Mella cava manant ex ilice; montibus altis  
Levis crepante lymphæ desilit pede."

"From oaks pure honey flows, from lofty hills  
Bound in light dance the murmuring rills."  
BOSCAWEN.

See also Euripides, *Bach*, 142; and Theoc. *Idyll.* 5, 124. Comp. Rosenmüller's *Alte u. neue Morgenland* on Ex. iii. 8, No. 194.

18. *That which he labored for shall he restore.* This means that he shall give back the profit of his labor. He shall not be permitted to enjoy it or to consume it. ¶ *And shall not swallow it down.* Shall not enjoy it; shall not eat it. He shall be obliged to give it to others. ¶ *According to his substance shall the restitution be.* Literally, according to Gesenius, "As a possession to be restored in which one rejoices not." The sense is, that all that he has

19 Because he hath <sup>1</sup> oppressed and hath forsaken the poor; *because* he hath violently taken away an house which he builded not;

20 Surely he shall not <sup>2</sup> feel

<sup>1</sup> crushed.

<sup>2</sup> know.

is like property which a man has, which he feels not to be his own, but which belongs to another, and which is soon to be given up. In such property a man does not find that pleasure which he does in that which he feels to be his own. He cannot dispose of it, and he cannot look on it and feel that it is his. So Zophar says it is with the wicked man. He can look on his property only as that which he will soon be compelled to part with, and not having any security for retaining it, he cannot rejoice in it as if it were his own. Dr. Lee, however, renders this, "As his wealth is, so shall his restitution be; and he shall not rejoice." But the interpretation proposed above seems to me to accord best with the sense of the Hebrew.

19. *Because he hath oppressed.* Marg., *crushed.* Such is the Hebrew. ¶ And *hath forsaken the poor.* He has plundered them, and then forsaken them—as robbers do. The meaning is, that he had done this by his oppressive manner of dealing, and then left them to suffer and pine in want. ¶ *He hath violently taken away an house which he builded not.* That is, by overreaching and harsh dealings, he has come in possession of dwellings which he did not build, or purchase in any proper manner. It does not mean that he had done this by violence—for Zophar is not describing a robber, but he means that he took advantage of the wants of the poor and obtained their property. This is often done still. A rich man takes advantage of the wants of the poor, and obtains their little farm or house for much less than it is worth. He takes a mortgage, and then forecloses it, and buys the property himself for much less than its real value, and thus practises a species of the worst

quietness in his belly, he shall not save of that which he desired.

21 There shall <sup>3</sup> none of his meat be <sup>1</sup> left; therefore shall no man look for his goods.

<sup>3</sup> or, *be none left for his meat.*

† Ec. 5. 13, 14.

kind of robbery. Such a man, Zophar says, must expect punishment—and if there is any man who has occasion to dread the wrath of heaven, it is he.

20. *Surely he shall not feel quietness.* Marg., as in the Heb., *know.* The sense is, he shall not know peace or tranquillity. He shall be agitated and troubled. Wemyss, however, renders this, "Because his appetite could not be satisfied." Noyes, "Because his avarice was insatiable." So Rosenmüller explains it. So the Vulgate renders it, *Nec est satiatius venter ejus.* The LXX, "Neither is there safety to his property, nor shall he be saved by his desire." But it seems to me that the former is the sense, and that the idea is, that he should not know peace or tranquillity after he had obtained the things which he had so anxiously sought. ¶ *In his belly.* Within him; in his mind or heart. The viscera in general in the Scriptures are regarded as the seat of the affections. We confine the idea now to the heart. ¶ *He shall not save of that which he desired.* Literally, he shall not escape with that which was an object of desire. He shall not be delivered from the evils which threaten him by obtaining that which he desired. All this shall be taken from him.

21. *There shall none of his meat be left.* Marg., "or, *be none left for his meat.*" Noyes renders it, "Because nothing escaped his greatness." Prof. Lee, "No survivor shall remain for his provision." But the meaning, probably, is, nothing shall remain of his food, or it shall all be wasted, or dissipated. ¶ *Therefore shall no man look for his goods.* Or rather, his goods or his property shall not endure. But a great variety of interpretations has been given to the passage. The Hebrew word rendered "shall look," *יִחַל*, is from *יָחַל*,

22 In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits: every hand of the wicked <sup>1</sup> shall come upon him.

23 When he is about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury

<sup>1</sup> or, troublesome.

which means to turn round, to twist, to whirl; and thence arises the notion of being firm, stable, or strong—as a rope that is twisted is strong. That is the idea here; and the sense is, that his property should not be secure or firm; or that he should not prosper. Jerome renders it, “Nothing shall remain of his goods.” The LXX, “Therefore his good things—*αὐτοῦ τὰ ἀγαθὰ*—shall not flourish”—*ἀνθίσσει*.

22. In the fulness of his sufficiency. When he seems to have an abundance. ¶ *He shall be in straits.* Either by the dread of calamity, or because calamity shall come suddenly upon him, and his property shall be swept away. When everything seemed to be abundant, he should be reduced to want. ¶ *Every hand of the wicked shall come upon him.* Marg., “or, troublesome.” The meaning is, that all that the wretched or miserable endure should come suddenly upon him. Rosenmüller suggests, however, that it means that all the poor, and all who had been oppressed and robbed by him, would suddenly come upon him to recover their own property, and would scatter all that he had. The general meaning is clear, that he would be involved in misery from every quarter, or on every hand.

23. When he is about to fill his belly. Or rather, “there shall be enough to fill his belly.” But what kind of food it should be, is indicated in the following part of the verse. God would fill him with the food of his displeasure. It is spoken sarcastically, as of a gormandizer, or a man who lived to enjoy eating, and the meaning is, that he should for once have enough. So Rosenmüller interprets it. ¶ *God shall cast the fury.* This is the kind of food that he shall have. God shall fill him with the tokens of his wrath—and he shall have enough.

of his wrath upon him, and shall rain it upon him while <sup>k</sup> he is eating.

24 He shall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of steel shall strike him through.

<sup>k</sup> Ps. 78. 30, 31.

¶ *And shall rain it upon him while he is eating.* Noyes renders this, “And rain it down upon him for his food.” The meaning is, that God would pour down his wrath like a plentiful shower while he was in the act of eating. In the very midst of his enjoyments, God would fill him with the tokens of his displeasure. There can be no doubt that Zophar designed that this should be understood to be applicable to Job. Indeed, no one can fail to see that his remarks are made with consummate skill, and that they are such as would be fitted to cut deep, as they were doubtless intended to do. The speaker does not, indeed, make a direct application of them, but he so makes his selection of proverbs that there could be no difficulty in perceiving that they were designed to apply to him, who, from such a height of prosperity, had been so suddenly plunged into so deep calamity.

24. *He shall flee from the iron weapon.* The sword, or the spear. That is, he shall be exposed to attacks, and shall flee in cowardice and alarm. Bands of robbers shall come suddenly upon him, and he shall have no safety except in flight. Prof. Lee explains this as meaning, “While he flees from the iron weapon, the brazen bow shall pierce him through.” Probably the expression is proverbial, like that in Latin, *Incidit in Scyllam cupiens vitare Charybdis*. ¶ *The bow of steel shall strike him through.* That is, the arrow from the bow of steel shall strike him down. Bows and arrows were commonly used in hunting and in war. To a considerable extent they are still employed in Persia, though the use has been somewhat superseded by the gun. Bows were made of various materials. The first were, undoubtedly, of wood. They were inlaid with horn, or ivory, or were made in part of metal.

25 It is drawn, and cometh out of the body; yea, the glittering sword cometh out of his gall: terrors <sup>1</sup> are upon him.

ℓ Ps. 73. 19.

Sometimes it would seem that the whole bow was made of metal, though it is supposed that the metal bow was not in general use. The *weight*, if nothing else, would be an objection to it. The word which is here rendered *steel* (כֶּסֶף) means, properly, *brass*, or *copper*,—but it is certain that brass or copper could never have been used to form the main part of the bow, as they are destitute of the elasticity which is necessary. Jerome renders it, *et irruet in arcum æreum—he rushes on the brazen bow*. So the LXX, τόξον χάλκειον. So the Chaldee, כֶּסֶף כֶּסֶף—the bow of brass. There is no certain proof that *steel* was then known—though *iron* is often mentioned. It is possible, however, that though the whole bow was not made of brass or copper, yet that such quantities of these metals were employed in constructing bows, that they might, without impropriety, be called bows of brass. The Oriental bow consists of three parts. The handle, or middle part—that on which the arrow rested—was straight, and might be made of wood, brass, copper, or any other strong substance. To this was affixed, at each end, pieces of horn, or of any other elastic substance, in this form,

, and to the

ends of these horns the string was applied. The straight piece might have been of brass, and so without impropriety it might be called a brazen bow. It is not properly rendered *steel*, at any rate, as the word here used is never employed to denote iron or steel.

25. *It is drawn.* Or rather, “he draws”—that is, he draws out the arrow that has been shot at him; or it may mean, as Prof. Lee supposes, that he draws, that is, *some one* draws the arrow from its quiver, or the sword from its sheath, in order to smite him. The ob-

26 All darkness shall be hid in his secret places: a fire <sup>m</sup> not blown shall consume him; it shall go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle.

m Ps. 21. 8. Matt. 3. 12.

ject is to describe his death, and to show that he should be certainly overtaken with calamity. Zophar, therefore, goes through the process by which he would be shot down, or shows that he could not escape. ¶ *And cometh out of the body.* That is, the arrow, or the glittering blade. It has penetrated the body, and passed through it. He shall be pierced through and through. ¶ *The glittering sword.* Heb., קֶרֶן, the *glittering*; scil., thing, or weapon, and is given to the sword, because it is kept bright. ¶ *Cometh out of his gall.* Supposed to be the seat of life. See Notes, ch. xvi. 13. ¶ *Terrors are upon him.* The terrors of death.

26. *All darkness shall be hid in his secret places.* The word *darkness* here, as is common, means evidently calamity. The phrase, *is hid*, means, *is treasured up for him*. The phrase, *in his secret places*, may mean, “for his treasures,” or instead of the great treasures which he had laid up for himself. The Apostle Paul has a similar expression, in which, perhaps, he makes an allusion to this place. Rom. ii. 5, “But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath, against the day of wrath.” Treasures formerly were laid up in secret places, or places of darkness, that were regarded as inaccessible. See Notes on Isa. xlv. 3. ¶ *A fire not blown.* A fire unkindled. Probably the meaning is, a fire that man has not kindled, or that is of heavenly origin. The language is such as would convey the idea of being consumed by lightning, and probably Zophar intended to refer to such calamities as had come upon the family of Job, ch. i. 16. There is much *tact* in this speech of Zophar, and in the discourses of his friends on this point. They never, I believe, refer expressly to the calamities that had come upon Job and his family. They never in so many words say, that

27 The heaven shall reveal his iniquity; and the earth shall rise up against him.

those calamities were proof of the wrath of heaven. But they go on to mention a great many similar cases in the abstract, to prove that the wicked would be destroyed in that manner; that when such calamities came upon men, it was proof that they were wicked, and they leave Job himself to make the application. The allusion, as in this case, was too broad to be misunderstood, and Job was not slow in regarding it as intended for himself. Prof. Lee (*in loc.*) supposes that there may be an allusion here to the "fire that shall not be quenched," or to the future punishment of the wicked. But this seems to me to be foreign to the design of the argument, and not to be suggested or demanded by the use of the word. The argument is not conducted on the supposition that men will be punished in the future world. That would at once have given a new phase to the whole controversy, and would have settled it at once. The question was about the dealings of God in *this life*, and whether men are punished according to their deeds here. Had there been a knowledge of the future world of rewards and punishments, the whole difficulty would have vanished at once, and the controversy would have been ended. ¶ *It shall go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle.* Heb. יָרַע עִירָה—"It shall be ill with whatever survives or remains in his tent." That is, all that remains in his dwelling shall be destroyed. Prof. Lee renders it, "In his tent shall his survivor be broken"—supposing that the word יָרַע is from קָרַע, to break. But it is more probably from נָרַע, to be evil; to suffer evil; to come of ill; and the sense is, that evil, or calamity, would come upon all that should remain in his dwelling.

27. The heaven shall reveal his iniquity. The meaning here is, that the whole creation would conspire against

28 The increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath.

such a man. Heaven and earth would be arrayed against him. The course of events would be so ordered as to seem designed to bring his character out, and to show what he was. He would attempt to conceal his sin, but it would be in vain. He would hide it in his bosom, but it would be developed. He would put on the air of piety and innocence, but his secret sin would be known. This seems to be the general sense of the verse; and it is not necessary to attempt to show *how* it would be done—whether by lightning from heaven, as Noyes supposes, or whether by some direct manifestation from the skies. Probably the meaning is, that the divine dispensations towards such a man—the overwhelming calamities which he would experience, would show what he was. The word *heaven* is not unfrequently put for God himself. Dan. iv. 23, "The heavens do rule." Luke xv. 21, "I have sinned against heaven." ¶ *The earth shall rise up against him.* Calamities from the earth. The course of events here. Want of success—sterility of soil—blight and mildew, would rise up against such a man, and show what he was. His real character would in some way be brought out, and it would be seen that he was a wicked man. Comp. Judges v. 20.

"They fought from heaven,  
The stars in their courses fought against  
Sisera."

28. The increase of his house shall depart. Sept., "Destruction shall bring his house to an end." The word rendered "depart" (נָזַל,—from נָזַל) means, properly, *shall go into captivity*. The sense is, that whatever he had laid up in his house would entirely disappear. ¶ *His goods shall flow away.* What he had gained would seem to flow away like water. ¶ *In the day of his wrath.* The wrath of God—for so the connexion demands.

29 This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the

heritage<sup>1</sup> appointed unto him by God.

<sup>1</sup> of his decree from.

29. *This is the portion of a wicked man.* This conclusion is similar to that which Bildad drew at the close of his speech, ch. xviii. 21. Zophar intended, undoubtedly, that Job should apply it to himself, and that he should draw the inference, that one who had been treated in this manner must be a wicked man. ¶ *And the heritage appointed.* Marg., *of his decree from.* The Hebrew is, "Of his word" (אָמְרוֹ)—that is, of his purpose. The idea is, that this is the divine rule, or arrangement. It is not a matter of chance. It is the result of appointment, and when men are afflicted in this manner, we are to conclude that God regards them as guilty. The whole object of the discussion was, to arrive at

the principles of the divine administration. Nothing is attributed to chance; and nothing is ascribed to second causes, except as indicating the will of God. It is assumed, that the course of events in the world was a sufficient exponent of the divine intention, and that when they understood how God *treated* a man, they could clearly understand how he regarded his character. The principle is a good one, when *the whole of existence* is taken into the account; the fault here was in taking in only a small part of existence—this short life—and hastening to the conclusion, that the character could be certainly determined by the manner in which God deals with men here.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

In this chapter, Job takes up the subject which had been under discussion, and replies, not only to Zophar, but to Eliphaz and Bildad, who had maintained the same opinions. They had asserted, and endeavoured to prove at great length, that the wicked are punished in this life, and had inferred, that when a man suffers much, it is full proof that he is eminently wicked. This point they had argued as the result of their own observation, and had maintained that it was the doctrine which had been settled by the course of events, and embodied in numerous proverbs. It was time to examine that position, and to see whether it was so, and Job enters on that task in this chapter. The chapter comprises the following points:—

(1.) The exordium, in which he asks their patient attention to what he had to say, and says, that when he had spoken, they might mock on, vs. 1—3.

(2.) He says that his complaint is not to man, and that his condition was such as to excite commiseration, and should, at least, have led them to be silent, and not to have overwhelmed him with reproaches, vs. 4—6.

(3.) He then enters on the great question. He takes up the inquiry, whether it is a matter of fact that the wicked suffer in this life, and are overwhelmed with calamity, as his friends maintained. He defends the contrary opinion, and shows that so far was this from being a fact, that they were often eminently prosperous, and that their just doom must be in another state, vs. 7—34. This important argument comprises the following particulars, viz.—(a) He states as a fact that they are prosperous, vs. 7—15. They live to a great age; they are mighty; their houses are secure; they are successful in business; they have instruments of joy in their dwellings; they and their families live in thoughtless mirth; they die without long-continued pain; and all this, when the effect of their whole lives has been to exclude God from their dwellings, and they have been saying to him, depart from us. (b) It might be said, that calamity came often upon the wicked, and that their candle was suddenly put out, and that woes were laid up for their children (vs. 16—21); but Job maintains that this is no certain rule of judging. This happened not to them alone. Of two persons of the same character, one might be seen dying in the midst of comforts, his breasts full of milk, and his bones moistened with marrow, and another in the bitterness of his soul; and how could any certain inference be drawn respecting their character from the dispensations of Providence towards them? How could it be certainly inferred that the man who suffered much was a wicked man, and that the other was a



favourite of Heaven? They lie down alike in the dust, after the various dispensations in regard to them, and both come to the same end in the grave, vs. 22—26. (c) Job seems to have supposed, from something in their manner, that his friends were not satisfied still, v. 27. They would ask, Where were the dwelling places of the mighty men of wickedness? What became of princes, and the great and proud oppressors? Were they not cut off, and prematurely consigned to the grave? To these questions, which they might be disposed to ask, Job states what he supposes to be the true doctrine in regard to the wicked, and what would accord with all the facts, as far as we can observe them. This doctrine he professes to have learned from travellers, and says that it was the result of their careful inquiries on this important subject in foreign lands. He maintains, therefore (vs. 29—34), that the true doctrine was, the wicked were reserved for future destruction. Now, he maintains, they were prospered. No one dares attack them to their face; no one punishes them. They live in prosperity, and they lie down peacefully in the grave, and the clods of the valley are as sweet to them as to other men. They are accompanied to the grave by multitudes; they drew numbers after them by their example; and in their death they are publicly bemoaned. Their punishment must be beyond the tomb. Job thus, with boldness, attacks the main principle—a principle which they regarded as settled. He carried the war into their camp, and the controversy after this became feeble, until his opponents were wholly silenced, and they ceased to attempt to answer him.

**B**UT Job answered and said,  
2 Hear diligently my speech,  
and let this be your consolations.

3 Suffer me that I may speak;  
and after that I have spoken,

2. *Hear diligently.* Heb., “Hearing hear”—that is, hear attentively. What he was about to say was worthy of their solemn consideration. ¶ *And let this be your consolations.* That is, “You came to me for the professed purpose of giving me consolation. In that you have wholly failed. You have done nothing to sustain or comfort me; but all that you have said has only tended to exasperate me, and to increase my sorrow. If you will now hear me attentively, I will take that as a consolation, and it shall be in the place of what I had a right to expect from you. It will be some comfort if I am permitted to express my sentiments without interruption, and I will accept it as a proof of kindness on your part.”

3. *Suffer me that I may speak.* Allow me to speak without interruption, or bear with me while I freely express my sentiments—it is all that I now ask. ¶ *And after that I have spoken, mock on.* Resume your reproaches, if you will, when I am done. I ask only the privilege of expressing my thoughts on a very important point, and when that is done, I will allow you to resume your remarks as you have done before, and you may utter your sentiments without

mock on.

4 As for me, is my complaint  
to man? and if it were so, why  
should not my spirit be <sup>1</sup> troubled?

<sup>1</sup> shortened.

interruption. Or it may be, that Job utters this in a kind of triumph, and that he feels that what he was about to say was so important that it would end the argument; and that all they could say after that would be mere mockery and reviling. The word rendered *mock on* (צַחֵץ), means, originally, to stammer, to speak unintelligibly—then, to speak in a barbarous or foreign language—then, to deride or to mock, to ridicule or insult. The idea is, that they might mock his woes, and torture his feelings as they had done, if they would only allow him to express his sentiments.

4. *As for me, is my complaint to man?* There is some difficulty in the interpretation of this verse, and considerable variety of explanation may be seen among expositors. The object of the verse is plain. It is to state a reason why they should hear him with patience and without interruption. The meaning of this part of the verse probably is, that his principal difficulty was not with his friends, but with God. It was not so much what they had said, that gave him trouble, as it was what God had done. Severe and cutting as were their rebukes, yet it was far more trying to him to be treated as he had been by God,

5 Mark <sup>1</sup> me, and be astonished, and lay <sup>a</sup> *your* hand upon *your* mouth.

<sup>1</sup> look unto.

<sup>a</sup> c. 40. 4.

as if he were a great sinner. That was what he could not understand. Perplexed and troubled, therefore, by the mysteriousness of the divine dealings, his friends ought to be willing to listen patiently to what he had to say; and in his anxiety to find out *why* God had treated him so, they ought not at once to infer that he was a wicked man, and to overwhelm him with increased anguish of spirit. It will be recollected that Job repeatedly expressed the wish to be permitted to carry his cause at once up to God, and to have his adjudication on it. See Notes on ch. xiii. 3, 18, seq. It is that to which he refers when he says here, that he wished to have the cause before God, and not before man. It was a matter which he wished to refer to the Almighty, and he ought to be allowed to express his sentiments with entire freedom. One of the difficulties in understanding this verse arises from the word *complaint*. We use it in the sense of *murmuring*, or *repining*; but this, I think, is not its meaning here. It is used rather in the sense of *cause*, *argument*, *reasoning*, or *reflections*. The Hebrew word מַעֲרָא, means, properly, that which is *brought out*—from מָצָא, to bring out, to put forth, to produce—as buds, leaves, flowers; and then it means *words*—as brought out, or spoken; and then, meditations, reflections, discourses, speeches; and then it *may* mean complaint. But there is no evidence that the word is used in that sense here. It means his reflections, or arguments. They were not to man. He wished to carry them at once before God, and he ought therefore to be allowed to speak freely. Jerome renders it, *disputatio mea*. The LXX, ἐλεγεῖς—used here, probably, in the sense of an argument to produce conviction, as it is often. ¶ *And if it were so, why should not my spirit be troubled?* Marg., *shortened*, meaning

6 Even when I remember I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh.

the same as troubled, afflicted, or impatient. A more literal translation will better express the idea, which is now lost sight of, “and if so, why should not my spirit be distressed?” That is, since my cause is with God—since my difficulty is in understanding his dealings with me—since I have carried my cause up to him, and all now depends on him, why should I not be allowed to have solicitude in regard to the result? If I manifest anxiety, who can blame me? Who would not, when his all was at stake, and when the divine dealings towards him were so mysterious?

5. *Mark me.* Marg., *look unto*. Literally, “Look upon me, that is, attentively look on me, on my sufferings, on my disease, and my losses. See if I am a proper object of reproach and mockery—see if I have not abundant reason to be in deep distress when God has afflicted me in a manner so unusual and mysterious.” ¶ *And be astonished.* Silent astonishment should be evinced instead of censure. You should wonder that a man whose life has been a life of piety should exhibit the spectacle which you now behold, while so many proud contemnors of God are permitted to live in affluence and ease. ¶ *And lay your hand upon your mouth.* As a token of silence and wonder. So Plutarch, de Iside et Osiride, “Wherefore, he had laid his finger on his mouth, as a symbol of silence and admiration—ἐχεμυθίας καὶ σιωπῆς σύμβολον.”

6. *Even when I remember I am afraid.* I have an internal shuddering and horror when I recall the scenes through which I have passed. I am myself utterly overwhelmed at the magnitude of my own sufferings, and they are such as should excite commiseration in your hearts. Some, however, have connected this with the following verse, supposing the idea to be, that he was horror-stricken when he contemplated the

7 Wherefore <sup>b</sup> do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?

<sup>b</sup> Je. 12. 1, 2.

prosperity of wicked men. But there seems to me to be no reason for this interpretation. His object is undoubtedly to show them that there was enough in his case to awe them into silence; and he says, in order to show that, that the recollection of his sufferings perfectly overwhelmed him, and filled him with horror. They who have passed through scenes of peculiar danger, or of great bodily suffering, can easily sympathize with Job here. The very recollection will make the flesh tremble.

7. *Wherefore do the wicked live.* Job comes now to the main design of his argument in this chapter, to show that it is a fact that the wicked often have great prosperity; that they are not treated in this life according to their character; and that it is not a fact that men of eminent wickedness, as his friends maintained, would meet, in this life, with proportionate sufferings. He says, that the fact is, that they enjoy great prosperity; that they live to a great age; and that they are surrounded with the comforts of life in an eminent degree. The meaning is, "If you are positive that the wicked are treated according to their character in this life—that great wickedness is followed by great judgments, how is it to be accounted for that they live, and grow old, and are mighty in power?" Job assumes the fact to be so, and proceeds to argue as if that were indisputable. It is remarkable, that the fact was not adverted to at an earlier period of the debate. It would have done much to settle the controversy. The question, "Why do the wicked live?" is one of great importance at all times, and one which it is natural to ask, but which it is not even yet always easy to answer. Some points are clear, and may be easily suggested. They are such as these—They live (1) to show the forbearance and long-suffering of God; (2) to furnish a full illustration of the character of the

8 Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes.

human heart; (3) to afford them ample space for repentance, so that there shall not be the semblance of a ground of complaint when they are called before God, and are condemned; (4) because God intends to make some of them the monuments of his mercy, and more fully to display the riches of his grace in their conversion, as he did in the case of Paul, Augustine, John Bunyan, and John Newton; (5) they may be preserved to be the instruments of his executing some important purpose by them, as was the case with Pharaoh, Sennacherib, and Nebuchadnezzar; or, (6) he keeps them, that the great interests of society may be carried on; that the affairs of the commercial and the political world may be forwarded by their skill and talent. For some, or all of these purposes, it may be, the wicked are kept in the land of the living, and are favored with great external prosperity, while many a Christian is oppressed, afflicted, and crushed to the dust. Of the *fact*, there can be no doubt; of the *reasons* for the fact, there will be a fuller development in the future world than there can be now. ¶ *Become old.* The friends of Job had maintained that the wicked would be cut off. Job, on the other hand, affirms that they live on to old age. The *fact* is, that many of the wicked are cut off for their sins in early life, but that some live on to an extreme old age. The argument of Job is founded on the fact, that *any* should live to old age, as, according to the principles of his friends, *all* were treated in this life according to their character. ¶ *Yea, are mighty in power?* Or, rather, *in wealth*—לחזק. Jerome. "Are comforted in riches"—*confortatique divitiis*. So the LXX, ἐν πλούτῳ. The idea is, that they become very rich.

8. *Their seed.* Their children—their posterity. ¶ *Is established in their sight.* Around them, where they may often see them—where they may enjoy their society. The friends of Job

9 Their houses *are* <sup>1</sup> safe from fear, neither *is* the rod of God upon them.

10 Their bull gendereth, and

<sup>1</sup> *peace from.*

had maintained, with great positiveness and earnestness, that the children of wicked men would be cut off. See ch. xviii. 19, xx. 28. This position Job now directly controverts, and says that it is a fact, that so far from being cut off, they are often established in the very presence of their ungodly parents, and live and prosper. How, he asks, is this consistent with the position, that God deals with men in this life according to their character?

9. *Their houses are safe from fear.* Marg., *peace from.* The friends of Job had maintained just the contrary. See ch. xx. 27, 28; xv. 21—24. Their idea was, that the wicked man would never be free from alarms. Job says, that they lived in security and peace, and that their houses are preserved from the intrusions of evil-minded men. ¶ *Neither is the rod of God upon them.* The rod is an emblem of punishment. The idea is, that they were free from the chastisements which their sins deserved. There can be no doubt that there are cases enough in which the wicked live in security, to justify Job in all that he here affirms, as there are instances enough in which the wicked are cut off for their sins, to make what his friends said plausible. The truth is, good and evil are intermingled. There is a general course of events by which the wicked are involved in calamity in this life, and the righteous are prospered; but, still, there are so many exceptions as to show the necessity of a future state of rewards and punishments. To us, who look to that future world, all is clear. But that view of the future state of retribution was not possessed by Job and his friends.

10. *Their bull gendereth.* See Rosenmüller and Lee on this verse. Comp. Bochart, Hieroz. P. 1, Lib. ii. c. xxx. The general idea is, that the wicked were prospered as well as the pious. God did not interpose by a miracle to

faileth not; their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf.

11 They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.

cut off their cattle, and to prevent their becoming rich.

11. *They send forth their little ones.* Their numerous and happy children they send forth to plays and pastimes. ¶ *Like a flock.* In great numbers. This is an exquisitely beautiful image of prosperity. What can be more so than a group of happy children around a man's dwelling? *And their children dance.* Dance for joy. They are playful and sportive, like the lambs of the flock. It is the skip of playfulness and exultation that is referred to here, and not the set and formal dance where children are instructed in the art; the sportiveness of children in the fields, the woods, and on the lawn, and not the set step taught in the dancing-school. The word here used (דָּנָה) means, to leap, to skip—as from joy, and then, to dance. Jerome has well rendered it, *exultant lusibus*—"they leap about in their plays." So the LXX, *προσπαίζουσιν*—*they frolic or play.* There is no evidence here that Job meant to say that they taught their children to dance; that they caused them to be trained in anything that now corresponds to dancing-schools; and that he meant to say that such a training was improper, and tended to exclude God from the heart. The image is one simply of health, abundance, exuberance of feeling, cheerfulness, prosperity. The houses were free from alarms; the fields were filled with herds and flocks, and their families of happy and playful children were around them. The object of Job was not to say that all this was in itself wrong, but that it was a plain matter of fact that God did not take away the comforts of all the wicked and overwhelm them with calamity. Of the impropriety of training children in a dancing-school, there ought to be but one opinion among the friends of religion, (see National Preacher for Jan. 1844, vol.

## 12 They take the timbrel and

xviii. p. 10,) but there is no evidence that Job referred to any such training here, and *this* passage should not be adduced to prove that dancing is wrong. It refers to the playfulness and the cheerful sports of children, and God has made them so that they *will* find pleasure in such sports, and so that they are benefited by them. There is not a more lovely picture of happiness and of the benevolence of God anywhere on earth than in such groups of children, and in their sportiveness and playfulness there is no more that is wrong than there is in the gambols of the lambs of the flock.

12. *They take the timbrel.* They have instruments of cheerful music in their dwellings; and this is an evidence that they are not treated as the friends of Job had maintained. Instead of being, as they asserted, overwhelmed with calamity, they are actually happy. They have all that can make them cheerful, and their houses exhibit all that is usually the emblem of contentment and peace. Rosenmüller and Noyes suppose this to mean, "They sing to the timbrel and harp;" that is, "they raise up" (קָנְנוּ) scil. *the voice* to accompany the timbrel. Dr. Good renders it, "They rise up to the tabor and harp, and trip merrily to the sound of the pipe." So Wemyss. It is literally, "They rise up with the tabor;" and the word *voice* may be understood, and the meaning may be that they accompany the timbrel with the voice. The Vulg. and the LXX, however, render it, they "take up the timbrel." Dr. Good supposes that the allusion is to the modes of dancing; to their raising themselves in an erect position, and then changing their position—advancing and retreating as in alternate dances, and quotes the following exquisite piece of poetry as illustrating it:

"Now pursuing, now retreating,  
Now in circling troops they meet;  
To brisk notes, in cadence meeting,  
Glance their many-twinkling feet."

Still, it seems to me, that the exact idea has not been expressed. It is

harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ.

this, "they raise, or elevate (קָנְנוּ) scil. THEMSELVES;" that is, they become exhilarated and excited at the sound of music. It is in their dwellings, and it is one of the indications of joy. Instead of lamentations and woe, as his friends said there would be in such dwellings, Job says that there was there the sound of music and mirth; that they exhilarated themselves, and were happy. On the word rendered "timbrel" (קָנְנוּ) and the word "harp" (קָנְנוּ), see Notes on Isa. v. 12. ¶ *At the sound of the organ.* The word *organ* we now apply to an instrument of music which was wholly unknown in the time of Job. With us it denotes an instrument consisting of pipes, which are filled with wind, and of stops touched by the fingers. It is the largest and most harmonious of the wind instruments, and is blown by bellows. That such an instrument was known in the time of Job, is wholly improbable, and it is not probable that it would be used for the purposes here referred to if it were known. Jerome renders it *organ*; the LXX, ψαλμοῦ—"the sound of a song;" Noyes, *pipe*; Lee, *lyre*; Good and Wemyss, *pipe*. The Hebrew word (קָנְנוּ) is derived from קָנַן, to breathe, to blow; and it is manifest that the reference is to some wind instrument. Various forms of wind instruments were early invented, and this is expressly mentioned as having been early in use. Thus it is said of Jubal (Gen. iv. 21), "He was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ"—קָנְנוּ. It was probably at first a rude reed or pipe, which came ultimately to be changed to the fife and the flute. It is here mentioned merely as an instrument exciting hilarity, and in the mere use of such an instrument there can be nothing improper. Job does not mean, evidently, to complain of it as wrong. He is simply showing that the wicked live in ease and prosperity, and are not subjected to trials and calamities, as his friends maintained.

13 They spend their days in <sup>1</sup> wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.

<sup>1</sup> or, *mirth*.

13. *They spend their days in wealth.* Marg., or *mirth*. Literally, "they wear out their days in good"—בטוב. Vulg. *in bonis*. Sept., ἐν ἀγαθοῖς—in good things; in the enjoyment of good. They are not oppressed with the evils of poverty and want, but they have abundance of "the good things" of life. ¶ *And in a moment go down to the grave.* Heb. to *Sheol*—but here meaning evidently the grave. The idea is, that when they die they are not afflicted with lingering disease, and great bodily pain, but having lived to an old age in the midst of comforts, they drop off suddenly and quietly, and sleep in the grave. God gives them prosperity while they live, and when they come to die he does not come forth with the severe expressions of his displeasure, and oppress them with long and lingering sickness. The author of the 73rd Psalm had a view of the death of the wicked remarkably similar to this, when he said,

For I was envious at the foolish,  
When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.  
For there are no bands in their death,  
But their strength is firm. vs. 3, 4.

All that Job says here is predicated on the supposition that such a sudden removal is preferable to death accompanied with long and lingering illness. The idea is, that it is in itself *desirable* to live in tranquillity; to reach an honorable old age surrounded by children and friends, and then quietly and suddenly to drop into the grave, without being a burden to friends. The wicked, he says, often live such a life, and he infers, therefore, that it is not a fact that God deals with men according to their character in this life, and that it is not right to draw an inference respecting their moral character from his dealings with them in this world. There are instances enough occurring in every age like those supposed here

14 Therefore <sup>c</sup> they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.

<sup>c</sup> Hab. 1. 15.

by Job, to justify the conclusion which he draws.

14. *Therefore.* This would seem to indicate that the *result* of their living in this manner was, that they rejected God, or that one of the consequences of their being prospered would be that they would cast off his government and authority; that they renounced him *because* they were thus prosperous, or because they wished to train up their children in merriment and dancing. All this may be true in itself, but that idea is not in the Hebrew. That is simply "*and they say*"—וַיֹּאמְרוּ. So the Vulgate; the LXX; the Chaldee—וַיֹּאמְרוּ; and the Syriac. The word "*therefore*" should not have been inserted. Job is not affirming that their mode of life is a *reason* why they reject the claims of God, but that it is a simple *fact* that they *do* live, even in this prosperity, in the neglect of God. This is the gist of what he is saying, that being thus wicked they were in fact prospered, and not punished as his friends had maintained. ¶ *They say unto God.* This is the language of their conduct. Men do not often formally and openly say this; but it is the language of their deportment. ¶ *Depart from us.* This is about all that the wicked say of God. *They wish him to let them alone.* They do not desire that he would come into their habitations; they would be glad never more to hear his name. Yet what a state of mind is this! What must be the condition and character of the human heart when this desire is felt! ¶ *We desire not the knowledge of thy ways.* We have no wish to become acquainted with God. His "*ways*" here mean his government, his law, his claims—whatever God does. Never was there a better description of the feelings of the human heart than is here expressed. The ways of God are displeasing to *man*,

15 What <sup>d</sup> is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit <sup>e</sup> should we have, if we pray unto him?

*d* Ex. 5. 2.

*e* Mal. 3. 14.

and they seek to crowd from their minds all respect to his commandments and claims. Yet, if this is the character of man, assuredly he is very far from being a holy being. What higher proof of depravity CAN there be, than that a man has no desire to know anything about a pure and holy God; no pleasure in becoming acquainted with his Maker!

15. *What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?* Comp. for similar expressions, Ex. v. 2; Prov. xxx. 9. The meaning here is, "What claim has the Almighty, or who is he, that we should be bound to obey and worship him? What authority has he over us? Why should we yield our will to his; and why submit to his claims?" This is the language of the human heart everywhere. Man seeks to deny the authority of God over him, and to feel that he has no claim to his service. He desires to be independent. He would cast off the claims of God. Forgetful that he made, and that he sustains him; regardless of his infinite perfections, and of the fact that he is dependent on him every moment, he asks with contempt, what right God has to set up a dominion over him. Such is man—a creature of a day—dependent for every breath he draws on that great Being, whose government and authority he so contemptuously disowns and rejects. ¶ *And what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?* What advantage would it be to us should we worship him? Men still ask this question, or, if not openly asked, they feel the force of it in their hearts. Learn hence, (1.) That wicked men are influenced by a regard to *self* in the inquiry about God, and in meeting his claims. They do not ask what is *right*, but what *advantage* will accrue to them. (2.) If they see no immediate benefit arising from worshipping God, they will not do it. Multitudes abstain from prayer, and from the house of

16 Lo, their good is not in their hand: the counsel <sup>f</sup> of the wicked is far from me.

*f* Ps. 1. 1.

God, because they cannot see how their self-interest would be promoted by it. (3.) Men *ought* to serve God, without respect to the immediate, selfish, and personal good that may follow to themselves. It is a good in itself to worship God. It is what is *right*; what the conscience says *ought* to be done: yet (4.) It is not difficult to answer the question which the sinner puts. There is an advantage in calling upon God. There is (a) the possibility of obtaining the pardon of sin by prayer—an immense and unspeakable "profit" to a dying and guilty man; (b) a peace which this world cannot furnish—worth more than all that it costs to obtain it; (c) support in trial in answer to prayer—in a world of suffering of more value than silver and gold; (d) the salvation of friends in answer to prayer—an object that should be one of intense interest to those who love their friends; (e) eternal life—the "profit" of which who can estimate? What are the few sacrifices which religion requires, compared with the infinite and immortal blessings which may be obtained by *asking* for them? "Profit!" What can be done by man that will be turned to so good an account as to pray? Where can man make so good an investment of time and strength as by calling on God to save his soul, and to bless his friends and the world?

16. *Lo, their good is not in their hand.* Schultens, Rosenmüller, and Noyes, suppose, I think correctly, that this is to be understood ironically, or as referring to what *they* had maintained. "Lo! you say that their good is not in their hand! They do not enjoy prosperity, do they? They are soon overwhelmed with calamity, are they? How often have I seen it otherwise! How often is it a fact that they continue to enjoy prosperity, and live and die in peace!" The common interpretation, which Prof. Lee has adopted, seems to

17 How oft is the <sup>1</sup> candle of the wicked put out? and *how oft* cometh their destruction upon them? *God* distributeth sorrows

<sup>1</sup> or, *lamp*.

me to be much less probable. According to that it means that "their prosperity was not brought about or preserved by their own power. It was by the power of God, and was under his control. An inscrutable Providence governs all things." But the true sense is, that Job is replying to the arguments which they had advanced, and one of those was, that whatever prosperity they had was not at all secure, but that in a moment it might be, and often was, wrested from them. Job maintains the contrary, and affirms that it was a somewhat unusual occurrence (ver. 17), that the wicked were plunged into sudden calamity. The phrase, "in their hand," means, *in their power*, or under their control, and at their disposal. ¶ *The counsel of the wicked is far from me.* Or rather, "far be it from me!" Perhaps the meaning is this: "Do not misunderstand me. I maintain that the wicked are often prospered, and that God does not in this life deal with them according to their deserts. They have life, and health, and property. But do not suppose that I am their advocate. Far be it from me to defend them. Far from me be their counsels and their plans. I have no sympathy with them. But I maintain merely that your position is not correct, that they are *always* subjected to calamity, and that the character of men can *always* be known by the dealings of Providence towards them." Or, it may mean, that he was not disposed to be united with them. They were, in fact, prospered; but though they were prospered, he wished to have no part in their plans and counsels. He would prefer a holy life with all the ills that might attend it.

17. *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* Marg., *lamp*. A light, or a lamp, was an image of prosperity. There is, probably, an allusion here to what had been maintained by Bildad, ch. xviii. 5, 6, that the light of the wicked

in his anger.

18 They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm <sup>2</sup> carrieth away.

<sup>2</sup> *stealeth away*.

would be extinguished, and their dwellings made dark. See Notes on those verses. Job replies to this by asking how often it occurred. He inquires whether it was a frequent thing. By this, he implies that it was not universal; that it was a less frequent occurrence than they supposed. The meaning is, "How often does it, in fact, happen that the light of the wicked is extinguished, and that God distributes sorrows among them in his anger? Much less frequently than you suppose, for he bestows upon many of them tokens of abundant prosperity." In this manner, by an appeal to *fact* and *observation*, Job aims to convince them that their position was wrong, and that it was not true that the wicked were invariably overwhelmed with calamity, as they had maintained. ¶ *God distributeth sorrows.* The word *God*, here, is understood, but there can be no doubt that it is correct. Job means to ask, how often it was true, in fact, that *God apportioned* the sorrows which he sent on men in accordance with their character. How often, in fact, did he treat the wicked as they deserved, and overwhelm them with calamity. It was not true that he did it, by any means, as often as they maintained, or so as to make it a certain rule in judging of character.

18. *They are as stubble before the wind.* According to the interpretation proposed of the previous verse, this may be read as a question, "How often is it that the wicked are made like stubble? You say that God deals with men exactly according to their characters, and that the wicked are certainly subjected to calamities; but how often does this, in fact, occur? Is it a uniform law? Do they not, in fact, live in prosperity, and arrive at a good old age?" It is not uncommon in the Scriptures to compare the wicked with stubble, and to affirm that they shall be driven away, as the chaff is driven by the wind. See Notes



19 God layeth up <sup>1</sup> his iniquity for his children: <sup>2</sup> he rewardeth him, and he shall know it.

20 His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.

<sup>1</sup> i. e., the punishment of iniquity.  
g Ex. 20. 5. Eze. 18. 14.

on Isa. xvii. 13. ¶ *The storm carrieth away.* Marg., *stealeth away.* This is a literal translation of the Hebrew. The idea is that of stealing away before one is aware, as a thief carries off spoil.

19. *God layeth up his iniquity for his children.* Marg., i. e., the punishment of iniquity. This is a reference evidently to the opinion which they had maintained. It may be rendered, "You say that God layeth up iniquity," &c. They had affirmed that not only did God, as a great law, punish the wicked in this life, but that the consequences of their sins passed over to their posterity; or, if they were not punished, yet the calamity would certainly come on their descendants. See ch. xviii. 19, 20; xx. 10, 28. This is the objection which Job now adverts to. The statement of the objection, it seems to me, continues to ver. 22, where Job says, that no one can teach God knowledge, or prescribe to him what he should do, and then goes on to say, that the *fact* was far different from what they maintained; that there was no such exact distribution of punishments; but that one died in full strength, and another in the bitterness of his soul, and both laid down in the dust together. This view seems to me to give better sense than any other interpretation which I have seen proposed. ¶ *He rewardeth him, and he shall know it.* That is, you maintain that God will certainly reward him in this life, and that his dealings with him shall so exactly express the divine view of his conduct, that he shall certainly know what God thinks of his character. This opinion they had maintained throughout the argument, and this Job as constantly called in question.

20. *His eyes shall see his destruction.* That is, his own eyes shall see his de-

21 For what pleasure *hath* he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst?

22 Shall <sup>h</sup> any teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high.

h Ro. 11. 34.

struction, or the calamities that shall come upon him. That is, "You maintain that, or this is the position which you defend." Job designs to meet this, and to show that it is not always so. ¶ *And he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.* Wrath is often represented as a cup which the wicked are compelled to drink. See Notes, Isa. li. 17.

21. *For what pleasure hath he, &c.* That is, what happiness shall he have in his family? This, it seems to me, is designed to be a reference to their sentiments, or a statement by Job of what they maintained. They held, that a man who was wicked, could have none of the comfort which he anticipated in his children, for he would himself be cut off in the midst of life, and taken away. ¶ *When the number of his months is cut off in the midst?* When his life is cut off—the word *months* here being used in the sense of *life*, or *years*. This they had maintained, that a wicked man would be punished, by being cut off in the midst of his way. Comp. ch. xiv. 21.

22. *Shall any teach God knowledge?* This commences the reply of Job to the sentiments of his friends to which he had just adverted. The substance of the reply is, that no one could prescribe to God how he should deal with men, and that it was not a *fact* that men were treated as they had supposed. Instead of its being true, as they maintained, that wicked men would all be cut down in some fearful and violent manner, as a punishment for their sins, Job goes on (vs. 23—26) to show that they died in a great variety of ways—one in full age and prosperity, and another in another manner. This, he says, God directs as he pleases. No one can teach him knowledge; no one can tell him what

23 One dieth in his <sup>1</sup> full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet.

<sup>1</sup> *very perfection, or, in the strength of his perfection.*

he ought to do. The reasoning of his friends, Job seems to imply, had been rather an attempt to teach God how he ought to deal with men, than a patient and candid inquiry into the *facts* in the case, and he says the facts were not as they supposed they ought to be. ¶ *Seeing he judgeth those that are high.* Or rather, he judges *among the things* that are high. He rules over the great affairs of the universe, and it is presumptuous in us to attempt to prescribe to him how he shall govern the world. The design of this and the following verses is to show, that from the manner in which men actually die, no argument can be derived to determine what was their religious condition, or their real character. Nothing is more fallacious than that kind of reasoning.

23. One dieth in his full strength, Marg., *very perfection, or, in the strength of his perfection.* The meaning is, that he dies in the very prime and vigor of life, surrounded with everything that can contribute to comfort. Of the truth of this position no one can doubt; and the wonder is, that the friends of Job had not seen or admitted it. ¶ *Being wholly at ease and quiet.* That is, having everything to make them happy, so far as external circumstances are concerned. He is borne down by no calamities; he is overwhelmed by no sudden and heavy judgments. The phrase in this verse rendered "full strength" (מִבְּרִית מִצְּדָקָה), is literally, "in the bone of his perfection." It means full prosperity.

24. His breasts. Marg., *milk-pails.* The marginal translation is much the most correct, and it is difficult to understand why so improbable a statement has been introduced into our common version. But there has been great variety in the translation. The Vulgate renders it, *Viscera ejus plena sunt adipe*—"his viscera are full of fat." So the LXX, τὰ ἐγκατα αὐτοῦ πλήρη σίαιτος. The Syriac, *his sides*; Prof. Lee, *his*

24 His <sup>2</sup> breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow.

<sup>2</sup> *or, milk-pails.*

bottles; Noyes, *his sides*; Luther, *sein milchfass*—*his milk-pail*; Wemyss, *the stations of his cattle*; Good, *his sleek skin*. In this variety of rendering, what hope is there of ascertaining the meaning of the word? It is not easy to account for this variety, though it is clear that Jerome and the LXX followed a different reading from the present, and instead of צְדָקָה, they read צִדְקָה—from צֶן—the belly; and that instead of the word חֵלֶב, as at present pointed, meaning *milk*, they understood it as if it were pointed חֵלֶב—meaning *fat*—the same letters, but different vowels. The word which is rendered *breast* (צֶדֶק) occurs nowhere else in the Hebrew Scriptures. It has become necessary, therefore, to seek its meaning in the ancient versions, and in the cognate languages. For a full examination of the word, the reader may consult Bochart, Hieroz. P. 1, Lib. ii. c. xlv. pp. 455, 458; or Rosenmüller, where the remarks of Bochart are abridged; or Lee on Job, *in loc.* The Chaldee renders it חֶסֶד—*his breasts*. So Junius et Tre., Piscator, and others. Among the Rabbins, Moses Bar. Nachman, Levi, and others, render it as denoting the breasts, or *mulctria*—*milk-vessels*, denoting, as some have supposed, the *lacteals*. This idea would admirably suit the connexion, but it is doubtful whether it can be maintained; and the presumption is, that it would be in advance of the knowledge of physiology in the times of Job. Aben Ezra explains it of the places where camels lie down to drink—an idea which is found in the Arabic, and which will well suit the connexion. According to this, the sense would be, that those places abounded with milk—that is, that he was prospered and happy. The Hebrew word צֶדֶק, as has been observed, occurs nowhere else.

25 And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure.

It is supposed to be derived from an obsolete root, the same as the Arabic

عطن, *to lie down around water, as cattle do*; and then the derivative denotes a place where cattle and flocks lie down around water; and then the passage would mean, "the resting places of his herds are full, or abound with milk." Yet the primary idea, according to Castell, Golius, and Lee, is that of saturating with water; softening, *scil.* a skin with water, or dressing a skin, for the purpose of using it as a bottle. Perhaps the word was used with reference to the place where camels came to drink, because it was a place that was *saturated* with water, or that abounded with water. The Arabic verb, also, according to Castell, is used in the sense of freeing a skin from wool and hairs—a *lana pilisve levavi pellem*—so that it might be dressed for use. From this reference to a *skin* thus dressed, Prof. Lee supposes that the word here means a *bottle*, and that the sense is, that his bottles were full of milk; that is, that he had great prosperity and abundance. But it is very doubtful whether the word will bear this meaning, and whether it is ever used in this sense. In the instances adduced by Castell, Schultens, and even of Prof. Lee, of the use of the word, I find no one where it means a *skin*, or denotes a bottle made of a skin. The application of the *verb* to a skin is only in the sense of saturating and dressing it. The leading idea in all the forms of the word, and its common use in Arabic, is *that of a place where cattle kneel down for the purpose of drinking*, and then, a place well watered, where a man might lead his camels and flocks to water. The noun would then come to mean a watering-place—a place that would be of great value, and which a man who had large flocks and herds would greatly prize. The thought here

26 They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them.

is, therefore, that the places of this kind, in the possession of the man referred to, would abound with milk—that is, he would have abundance. ¶ *Are full of milk.* Milk, butter, and honey, are, in the Scriptures, the emblems of plenty and prosperity. Many of the versions, however, here render this *fat*. The change is only in the pointing of the Hebrew word. But, if the interpretation above given be correct, then the word here means *milk*. ¶ *And his bones are moistened with marrow.* From the belief, that bones full of marrow are an indication of health and vigor.

26. *They shall lie down alike in the dust.* The emphasis here is on the word *alike*—יחד. The idea is, that they should die in a *similar manner*. There would be no such difference in the mode of their death as to determine anything about their character, or to show that one was the friend of God, and that the other was not. The friends of Job had maintained, that that could be certainly known by the divine dealings with men, either in their life, or in their death. Job combats this opinion, and says that there is no such marked distinction in their life, nor is there any certain indication of their character in their death. Prosperity often attends the wicked as well as the righteous, and the death of the righteous and the wicked resemble each other. ¶ *And the worms shall cover them.* Cover them *both*. They shall alike moulder back to dust. There is no distinction in the grave. There is no difference in the manner in which they moulder back to dust. No argument can be drawn respecting their character from the divine dealings towards them when in life—none from the manner of their death—none from the mode in which they moulder back to dust. On the reference to the *worm* here, see Notes on ch. xiv. 11.

27 Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices *which* ye wrongfully imagine against me.

28 For ye say, Where is the house of the prince? and where are the <sup>1</sup> dwelling places of the wicked?

<sup>1</sup> *tent of the tabernacles.*

27. *Behold, I know your thoughts.* That is, "I see that you are not satisfied, and that you are disposed still to maintain your former position. You will be ready to ask, Where are the proofs of the prosperity of the wicked? Where are the palaces of the mighty? Where are the dwelling places of ungodly men?" ¶ *And the devices which ye wrongfully imagine against me.* The course of sophistical argument which you pursue, the tendency and design of which is to prove that I am a wicked man. You artfully lay down the position, that the wicked must be, and are, in fact, overwhelmed with calamities, and then you infer, that because I am overwhelmed in this manner, I must be a wicked man.

28. *For ye say, Where is the house of the prince?* That is, you maintain that the house of the wicked man, in a high station, will be certainly overthrown. The parallelism, as well as the whole connexion, requires us to understand the word *prince* here as referring to a wicked ruler. The word used (נָזִיר) properly means, one willing, voluntary, prompt; then, one who is liberal, generous, noble; then, one of noble birth, or of elevated rank; and then, as princes often had that character, it is used in a bad sense, and means a *tyrant*. See Isa. xiii. 2. ¶ *And where are the dwelling places of the wicked?* Marg., *tent of the tabernacles.* The Hebrew is, "The tent of the dwelling places." The dwelling place was usually a *tent*. The meaning is, that such dwelling places would be certainly destroyed, as an expression of the divine displeasure.

29. *Have ye not asked them that go*

29 Have ye not asked them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens,

30 That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to the day of <sup>2</sup> wrath.

<sup>2</sup> *wraths.*

*by the way?* Travellers, who have passed into other countries, and who have had an opportunity of making observations, and of learning the opinions of those residing there. The idea of Job is, that they might have learned from such travellers that such men were reserved for future destruction, and that calamity did not immediately overtake them. Information was obtained in ancient times by careful observation and by travelling, and they who had gone into other countries would be regarded as peculiarly well qualified to bear testimony on a point like this. They could speak of what they had observed of the actual dealings of God there, and of the sentiments of sages there. The idea is, that they would confirm the truth of what Job had said, that the wicked were often prosperous and happy. ¶ *And do ye not know their tokens.* The signs, or intimations which they have given of the actual state of things in other countries, perhaps by the inscriptions, records, and proverbs, by which they had signified the result of their inquiries.

30. *That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction?* He is not punished, as you maintain, at once. He is kept with a view to future punishment; and though calamity will certainly overtake him at some time, yet it is not immediate. This was Job's doctrine in opposition to theirs, and in this he was undoubtedly correct. The only wonder is, that they had not all seen it sooner, and that it should have been necessary to make this appeal to the testimony of travellers. Rosenmüller, Noyes, and Schultens understand it as meaning that the wicked are spared

31 Who shall declare his way to his face? and who shall repay him *what* he hath done?

in the day of destruction—that is, in the day when destruction comes upon other men. This accords well with the argument which Job is maintaining. Yet the word (נָחַץ) rather means, especially when followed by ה, to hold back, reserve, or retain for something future; and this is the sentiment which Job was maintaining, that the wicked were not cut off at once, or suddenly overwhelmed with punishment. He did not deny that they would be punished at some period; and that exact justice would be done them. The point of the controversy turned upon the inquiry whether this would come *at once*, or whether the wicked might not live long in prosperity. ¶ *They shall be brought forth*—נִהְיֶה. They shall be led, or conducted—as one is to execution. This appears as if Job held to the doctrine of *future* retribution. But when that time would be, or what were his exact views in reference to the future judgment, is not certainly intimated. It is clear, however, from this discussion, that he supposed it would be *beyond* death, for he says that the wicked are prospered in this life; that they go down to the grave and sleep in the tomb; that the clods of the valley are sweet unto them (vs. 32, 33), yet that the judgment, the just retribution, would certainly come. This passage, therefore, seems to be decisive to prove that he held to a state of retribution beyond the grave, where the inequalities of the present life would be corrected, and where men, though prospered here, would be treated as they deserved. This, he says, was the current opinion. It was that which was brought by travellers, who had gone into other lands. What impropriety is there in supposing that he may refer to some travellers who had gone into the country where Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob had lived, or then lived, and that they had brought this back as the prevalent belief there? To this

32 Yet shall he be brought to the <sup>1</sup> grave, and shall <sup>2</sup> remain in the tomb.

<sup>1</sup> graves.

<sup>2</sup> watch in the heap.

current faith in that foreign land, he may now appeal as deserving the attention of his friends, and as meeting all that they had said. It *would* meet all that they said. It was the exact truth. It accorded with the course of events. And sustained, as Job says it was, by the prevailing opinion in foreign lands, it was regarded by him as settling the controversy. It is as true now as it was then; and this solution, which could come only from revelation, settles all inquiries about the rectitude of the divine administration in the dispensation of rewards and punishments. It answers the question, "How is it consistent for God to bestow so many blessings on the wicked, while his own people are so much afflicted? The answer is, they have *their* good things in this life, and in the future world all these inequalities will be rectified. ¶ *Day of wrath*. Marg., as in Heb., *wraths*. The plural form here is probably employed to denote emphasis, and means the same as *fierce wrath*.

31. *Who shall declare his way to his face?* That is, the face of the wicked. Who shall dare to rise up and openly charge him with his guilt? The idea is, that none would dare to do it, and that, therefore, the wicked man was not punished according to his character here, and was reserved to a day of future wrath. ¶ *And who shall repay him what he hath done?* The meaning is, that many wicked men lived without being punished for their sins. No one was able to recompense them for the evil which they had done, and consequently they lived in security and prosperity. Such were the tyrants and conquerors who had made the world desolate.

32. *Yet shall he be brought to the grave*, Marg., *graves*. That is, he is brought with honor and prosperity to the grave. He is not cut down by manifest divine displeasure for his sins. He is conducted to the grave as other men are,

notwithstanding his enormous wickedness. The *object* of this is clearly to state that he would not be overwhelmed with calamity, as the friends of Job had maintained, and that nothing could be determined in regard to his character from the divine dealing toward him in this life. ¶ *And shall remain in the tomb.* Marg., *watch in the heap.* The marginal reading does not make sense, though it seems to be an exact translation of the Hebrew. Noyes renders it, "Yet he still survives upon his tomb." Prof. Lee, "For the tomb was he watchful;" that is, his anxiety was to have an honored and a splendid burial. Wemyss, "They watch over his tomb;" that is, he is honored in his death, and his friends visit his tomb with affectionate solicitude, and keep watch over his grave. So Dr. Good renders it. Jerome translates it, *et in congerie mortuorum vigilabit.* The LXX, "And he shall be borne to the graves, and he shall watch over the tombs;" or, he shall cause a watch to be kept over his tomb — *ἐπὶ σωρῶν ἡγρούνησεν.* Amidst this variety of interpretation, it is not easy to determine the true sense of the passage. The *general* meaning is not difficult. It is, that he should be honored even in his death; that he would live in prosperity, and be buried with magnificence. There would be nothing in his death or burial which would certainly show that God regarded him as a wicked man. But there is considerable difficulty in determining the exact sense of the original words. The word rendered *tomb* in the text, and *heap* in the margin (שֹׁמֵר), occurs only in the following places, Ex. xxii. 6, Job v. 26, Judges xv. 5, where it is rendered *a shock of corn*, and in this place. The *verb* in the Syriac, Arabic, and in Chaldee, means *to heap up* (see Castell), and the noun may denote, therefore, a stack, or a heap of grain, or a tomb, that was made by a pile of earth, or stones. The ancient *tumuli* were mere heaps of earth or stone, and probably such a pile was made usually over a grave as a monument. On the meaning of the word here used, the reader may consult Bochart, Hieroz. P. i. L. iii. c. xiii. p. 553. There can be little doubt that

it here means a tomb, or a monument raised over a tomb. There is more difficulty about the word rendered "shall remain" (רָחַץ). This properly means, to wake, to be watchful, to be sleepless. So the Chaldee ܪܚܥ, and the Arabic

The verb is commonly rendered

in the Scriptures, *watch* or *waketh*. See Ps. cxxvii. 1, cii. 7; Jer. xxxi. 28, i. 12, v. 6, xlv. 27; Isa. xxix. 20; Ezra viii. 29; Dan. ix. 14. There is usually in the word the notion of *watching*, with a view to guarding, or protecting, as when one watches a vineyard, a house, or other property. The sense here is, probably, that his tomb should be carefully *watched* by friends, and the verb is probably taken impersonally, or used to denote that *some one* would watch over his grave. This might be either as a proof of affection, or to keep it in repair. One of the most painful ideas might have been then, as it is now among American savages (Bancroft's History of the United States, vol. iii. p. 299), that of having the grave left or violated, and it may have been regarded as a peculiar honor to have had friends who would come and watch over their sepulchre. According to this view, the meaning is, that the wicked man was often honorably buried; that a monument was reared to his memory; and that every mark of attention was paid to him after he was dead. Numbers followed him to his burial, and friends came and wept with affection round his tomb. The argument of Job is, that there was no such distinction between the lives and death of the righteous and the wicked as to make it possible to determine the character; and is it not so still? The wicked man often dies in a palace, and with all the comforts that every clime can furnish to alleviate his pain, and to soothe him in his dying moments. He lies upon a bed of down; friends attend him with unwearied care; the skill of medicine is exhausted to restore him, and there is every indication of grief at his death. So, in the place of his burial, a monument of finest marble, sculptured with all the skill of art, is reared over his grave. An in-

33 The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him, and

every<sup>i</sup> man shall draw after him, as *there are* innumerable before him.

<sup>i</sup> He. 9. 27.

scription, beautiful as taste can make it, proclaims his virtues to the traveller and the stranger. Friends go and plant roses over his grave, that breathe forth their odors around the spot where he lies. Who, from the dying scene, the funeral, the monument, the attendants, would suppose that he was a man whom God abhorred, and whose soul was already in hell? This is the argument of Job, and of its solidity no one can doubt.

33. *The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him.* That is, he shall lie as calmly as others in the grave. The language here is taken from that delusion of which we all partake when we reflect on death. We think of *ourselves* in the grave, and it is almost impossible to divest our minds of the idea, that we shall be conscious there, and be capable of understanding our condition. The idea here is, that the person who was thus buried, might be sensible of the quiet of his abode, and enjoy, in some measure, the honors of the beautiful or splendid tomb in which he was buried, and the anxious care of his friends. So we *think* of our friends, though we do not often *express* it. The dear child that is placed in the dark vault, or that is covered up in the ground—we feel as if we could not have him there. We insensibly shudder, as if *he* might be conscious of the darkness and chilliness, and a *part* of our trial arises from this delusion. So felt the American savage—expressing the emotions of the heart, which, in other cases, are often concealed. “At the bottom of a grave, the melting snows had left a little water; and the sight of it chilled and saddened his imagination. ‘You have no compassion for my poor brother’—such was the reproach of an Algonquin—‘the air is pleasant, and the sun so cheering, and yet you do not remove the snow from the grave, to warm him a little,’ and he knew no contentment till it was done.” Bancroft’s History,

U. S. iii. 294, 295. The same feeling is expressed by Fingal over the grave of Gaul:

“Prepare, ye children of musical strings,  
The bed of Gaul, and his sun-beam by him;  
Where may be seen his resting-place from afar  
Which branches high overshadow,  
Under the wing of the oak of greenest flourish,  
Of quickest growth, and most durable form,  
Which will shoot forth its leaves to the breeze  
of the shower,  
While the heath around is still withered.  
Its leaves, from the extremity of the land,  
Shall be seen by the birds in Summer;  
And each bird shall perch, as it arrives,  
On a sprig of its verdant branch;  
Gaul in his mist shall hear the cheerful note,  
While the virgins are singing of Evirchoma.”

Thus, also, Knolles (History of the Turks, p. 332) remarks of the Sultan Murad II., that “after his death, his son raised the siege, and returned back to Adrianople. He caused the dead to be buried with great solemnity in the Western suburbs of Broosa, in a chapel without a roof, in accordance with the express desire of the Sultan, in order that the mercy and blessing of God might descend on him, that the sun and the moon might shine on his grave, and the rain and the dew of heaven fall upon it.” Rosenmüller’s *Alte u. neue Morgenland*, in *loc.* The word *clods* here, is rendered *stones* by Prof. Lee, but the more general interpretation is that of *sods*, or *clods*. The word is used only here, and in Job xxxviii. 38, where it is also rendered *clods*. The word *valley* (וָאֵל) means usually a stream, brook, or rivulet, and then a valley where such a brook runs. Notes, ch. vi. 15. It is not improbable that such valleys were chosen as burial places, from the custom of planting shrubs and flowers around a grave, because they would flourish best there. The valley of Jehoshaphat, near Jerusalem, was long occupied as a burial place. ¶ And every man shall draw after him. Some suppose that this means, that he shall share the common lot of mortals—that innumerable multi-

34 How then comfort ye me  
in <sup>k</sup> vain, seeing in your answers

k c. 16. 2.

tudes have gone thither before him—and that succeeding generations shall follow to the same place appointed for all the living. *Noyes*. Others, however, suppose that this refers to a funeral procession, and that the meaning is, that all the world is drawn out after him, and that an innumerable multitude precedes him when he is buried. Others, again, suppose that it means, that his example shall attract many to follow and adopt his practices, as many have done before him in imitating similar characters. *Lee*. It is clear that there is some notion of honor, respect, or pomp in the language; and it seems to me more likely that the meaning is, that he would draw out everybody to go to the place where he was buried, that they might look on it, and thus honor him. What multitudes would go to look on the grave of Alexander the Great! How many have gone to look on the place where Cæsar fell! How many have gone, and will go, to look on the place where Nelson or Napoleon is buried! This, I think, is the idea here, that the man who should thus die, would draw great numbers to the place where he was buried, and that before him, or in his presence, there was an innumerable multitude, so greatly would he be honored.

34. *How then comfort ye me in vain, &c.* That is, how can you be qualified to give me consolation in my trials, who have such erroneous views of the government and dealings of God? True consolation could be founded only on

there remaineth <sup>l</sup> falsehood?

<sup>l</sup> transgression.

correct views of the divine government; but such views, Job says, they had not. With their conceptions of the divine administration, they could not administer to him any real consolation. We may learn hence, (1.) That all real consolation in trial must be based on correct apprehensions of the divine character and plans. Falsehood, delusion, error, can give no permanent comfort. (2.) They whose office it is to administer consolation to the afflicted, should seek after the *truth* about God and his government. They should endeavour to learn why he afflicts men, what purpose he proposes to accomplish, and what are the proper ends of trial. They should have an unwavering conviction that he is right, and should see as far as possible *why* he is right, before they attempt to comfort others. Their own souls should be imbued with the fullest conviction that all the ways of God are holy, and then they should go and endeavour to pour their convictions into other hearts, and make them feel so too. A minister of the gospel, who has unsettled, erroneous, or false views of the character and government of God, is poorly qualified for his station, and will be a "*miserable comforter*," to those who are in trial. Truth alone sustains the soul in affliction. Truth only can inspire confidence in God. Truth only can break the force of sorrow, and enable the sufferer to look up to God and to heaven with confidence and joy.



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# THE BOOK OF JOB.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

THIS chapter commences the third series in the controversy. As before, Eliphaz begins the argument, and replies to Job. He maintains his former sentiments, and does it with great energy, and is evidently roused by the argument of Job. Job had attacked their main position in the previous chapter, and it became necessary now to fortify it if possible. There is, also, much severity in this discourse, and far more than usual that is personal. Job is openly charged with aggravated guilt, which before had been rather *implied* than *said*. But here is no concealment; and, perhaps, this is an instance, such as often occurs, where, when a man has the worst of the argument, he resorts to a personal attack on him who has confuted him. The argument of Eliphaz comprises the following points:—(1.) That it could not be any advantage to God that a man was righteous, and that he set up a claim to perfection. God had nothing to *lose* in treating men as they deserve, and could not be deterred by fear from dealing with them according to their real character, vs. 1—4. By these remarks, he seems to be replying to Job, as if it must be true, that if God did *not* deal with them according to their real character in this life, as Job had maintained, it must be either because he *feared* the wicked man, or because there was some *advantage* which he expected to derive from the fact that he lived. Instead of meeting the *facts*, to which Job had appealed, he goes into an abstract argument, of a very sophistical character, to show that it *could not* be so—a very common mode with controversialists. (2.) Eliphaz then openly attacks Job; appeals to him as an instance of the truth of his position; says that it was an indisputable fact, that he was a great sinner, that his iniquities were infinite, and that, therefore, he had been overwhelmed with these calamities, vs. 5—11. He argues from it, as a point which could not be called in question, that Job's calamities had come upon him in consequence of a guilty life; and that, whatever he might say about the *theory* of the divine government, his own case was one which would confute it all. Job was himself, he maintains, a full demonstration that God would punish the wicked in this life. In these unkind remarks, the course of the argument is somewhat changed. Before this, the friends of Job had maintained the abstract position, that the wicked would be dealt with in this life according to their deserts, and had given a great variety of illustrations of this. But it had been left to be *inferred* that Job had this character BECAUSE these calamities had come upon him. But, *now*, the argument is changed. It is maintained, as an indisputable point, that he is an eminently wicked man, and that these calamities have come upon him in consequence of his crimes; and that, therefore, *his own case* showed that God would punish the wicked in this life. (3.) In vs. 12—14, Eliphaz says, that it was implied in the argument of Job that God *could not* distinguish between the actions of men, and the reasons why he did not treat them as they deserved must be, that thick clouds interposed between them and God, so that he could not see their conduct, or that the distance between God and man was so great, that he was not able to mark what man was doing. Job had, in fact, maintained no such position; but Eliphaz *inferred* that this must be his meaning, or that his sentiments must lead to this. (4.) Eliphaz then (vs. 15—20) refers Job to the case of those who perished in the flood, and speaks as if Job had adopted their sentiments. They lived in prosperity. They said to God, Depart from us. Their houses were filled with good things. Yet, he says they were suddenly destroyed, and that at so signal a judgment the righteous rejoiced—implying that it was not improper to be gratified when so heavy calamities had come upon one who had shewn himself as wicked as Job was now proved to be. (5.) In the conclusion, Eliphaz urges Job to become truly acquainted with God, assuring him that he would then be at peace, and then gives a glowing description of the prosperity to which he might look, as a reward, vs. 21—30. He would be rich: the Almighty would be his defence; he would find happiness in God; his prayer would be heard; light would shine upon his ways; and when others were humbled, he would be exalted.

6 For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked <sup>1</sup> of their clothing.

7 Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou

<sup>1</sup> clothes of the naked.

6. *For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought.* The only evidence which Eliphaz seems to have had of this was, that this was a heinous sin, and that as Job seemed to be severely punished, it was to be *inferred* that he must have committed some such sin as this. No way of treating an unfortunate and a suffering man could be more unkind. A *pledge* is that which is given by a debtor to a creditor, for security for the payment of a debt, and would be, of course, that which was regarded as of value. Garments, which constituted a considerable part of the wealth of the Orientals, would usually be the pledge which would be given. With us, in such cases, watches, jewellery, notes, mortgages, are given as collateral security, or as pledges. The law of Moses required that when a man took the garment of his neighbor for a pledge, it should be restored by the time the sun went down, Ex. xxii. 26, 27. The crime here charged on Job was, that he had exacted a pledge from another where there was no just claim to it; that is, where no debt had been contracted, where a debt had been paid, or where the security was far beyond the value of the debt. The injustice of such a course would be obvious. It would deprive the man of the use of the property which was pledged, and it gave him to whom it was pledged an opportunity of doing wrong, as he might retain it, or dispose of it, and the real owner see it no more. ¶ *And stripped the naked of their clothing.* Marg., *clothes of the naked.* That is, of those who were poorly clad, or who were nearly destitute of clothes. The word *naked* is often used in this sense in the Scriptures. See Notes, John xxi. 7. The meaning here is, that Job had taken away by oppression even the garments of the poor, in order to enrich himself.

hast withholden bread from the hungry.

8 But *as for* <sup>2</sup> the mighty man, he had the earth; and the <sup>3</sup> honourable man dwelt in it.

<sup>2</sup> man of arm.

<sup>3</sup> eminent, or, accepted for countenance.

7. *Thou hast not given water to the weary.* That is, thou hast withheld the rites of hospitality—one of the most grievous offences which could be charged on an Arabian. Comp. Notes on Isa. xxi. 14. In all the Oriental world, hospitality was regarded, and is still, as a duty of the highest obligation.

8. *But as for the mighty man.* Heb., as in the margin, *man of arm.* The arm, in the Scriptures, is the symbol of power. Ps. x. 15, "Break thou the arm of the wicked." Ezek. xxx. 21, "I have broken the arm of Pharaoh." Ps. lxxxix. 13, "Thou hast a mighty arm." Ps. xcvi. 1, "His holy arm hath gotten him the victory." The reason of this is, that the sword and spear were principally used in war, and success depended on the force with which they were wielded by the arm. There can be no doubt that this is intended to be applied to Job, and that the meaning is, that he had driven the poor from their possessions, and he had taken forcible occupancy of what belonged to them. The idea is, that he had done this by power, not by right. ¶ *Had the earth.* Took possession of the land, and drove off from it those to whom it belonged, or who had an equal right to it with him. ¶ *And the honourable man.* Marg., *eminent, or accepted for countenance.* Heb., "Lifted up of countenance;" that is, the man whose countenance was elevated either by honor or pride. It may be used to describe either; but, perhaps, there is more force in the former, in saying that it was the great man, the man of rank and office, who had got possession. There is, thus, some sarcasm in the severe charge: "The great man—the man of rank, and wealth, and office, has got possession, while the humble and poor are banished." Job had had great possessions; but this charge

9 Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken.

10 Therefore snares<sup>b</sup> are round about thee, and sudden fear troubleth thee;

b c. 18. 8—10. Ps. 11. 6.

as to the manner in which he had acquired them, seems to be wholly gratuitous. Eliphaz takes it for granted, since he was so severely punished, that it *must have been* in some such way.

9. *Thou hast sent widows away empty.* That is, without regarding their wants, and without doing anything to mitigate their sorrows. The oppression of the widow and the fatherless is, in the Scriptures, everywhere regarded as a crime of peculiar magnitude. See Notes on Isa. i. 17. ¶ *The arms of the fatherless have been broken.* Thou hast taken away all that they relied on. Thou hast oppressed them and taken advantage of their weak and defenceless condition to enrich yourself. This charge was evidently gratuitous and unjust. It was the result of an *inference* from the fact that he was thus afflicted, and about as just as inferences, in such cases, usually are. To all this, Job replies in beautiful language, in ch. xxix. 11, 16, when describing his former condition, and in justice to him, we may allow him to speak *here*, and to show what was, in fact, the course of his life.

When the ear heard me, then it blessed me ;  
And when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me :

Because I delivered the poor that cried,  
And the fatherless, and him that had none to help him,

The blessing of him that was ready to perish  
came upon me,

And I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.  
I put on righteousness, and it clothed me ;  
My judgment was as a robe and a diadem.

I was eyes to the blind,

And feet was I to the lame ;

I was a father to the poor,

And the cause which I knew not, I searched out.

10. *Therefore snares are round about thee.* Snares were used for catching wild animals and birds, and the word then came to denote any sudden cala-

11 Or darkness, *that* thou canst not see; and abundance of waters cover thee.

12 *Is* not God in the height of heaven? and behold the <sup>1</sup> height of the stars, how high they are!

<sup>1</sup> head.

mity. See ch. xviii. 8—10. Eliphaz here says, that it *must be* that these calamities came upon Job in consequence of such sins as he had specified. About that he took it for granted there could be no dispute. ¶ *And sudden fear.* The calamities of Job came upon him suddenly, ch. i. It was to this, doubtless, that Eliphaz alluded.

11. *Or darkness.* Darkness and night in the Scriptures are emblems of calamity. ¶ *That thou canst not see.* Deep and fearful darkness; total night, so that nothing is visible. That is, the heaviest calamities had overwhelmed him. ¶ *And abundance of waters.* An emblem, also, of calamities. Ch. xxvii. 20; Ps. lxi. 1, 2; lxxiii. 10.

12. *Is not God in the height of heaven?* In the highest heaven. That is, Is not God exalted over all worlds? This seems to be intended to refer to the sentiments of Job, as if he had maintained that God was so exalted that he could not notice what was occurring on earth. It should, therefore, be read in connexion with the following verse: "God is so exalted, that thou sayest, How can he know? Can he look down through the thick clouds which intervene between him and man?" Job had maintained no such opinion, but the process of thought in the mind of Eliphaz seems to have been this. Job had maintained that God did *not* punish the wicked in this life as they deserved, but that they lived and prospered. Eliphaz *inferred* that he could hold that opinion only because he supposed that God was so exalted that he could not attend to worldly affairs. He knew no other way in which the opinion could be held, and he proceeds to argue *as if* it were so. Job had in the previous chapter appealed to plain *facts*, and had rested his whole argument on them.

13 And thou sayest, <sup>1</sup> How c<sup>1</sup> or, *what.* c Ps. 10. 11. 73. 11.

Eliphaz, instead of meeting the *facts* in the case, or showing that they did not exist as Job said they did, considered his discourse as a denial of Divine Providence, and as representing God to be so far above the earth that he could not notice what was occurring here. How common is this in theological controversy! One man, in defending his opinions, or in searching for the truth, appeals to *facts*, and endeavors to ascertain their nature and bearing. His adversary, instead of meeting them, or showing that they are not so, at once appeals to some admitted doctrine, to some established article of a creed, or to some tradition of the fathers, and says that the appeal to fact is but a denial of an important doctrine of revelation. It is easier to charge a man with denying the doctrine of Providence, or to call him by a harsh name, than it is to meet an argument drawn from fact and from the plain meaning of the Bible. ¶ *And behold the height of the stars.* Marg., as in Heb., *head—*  
~~the~~ God is more exalted than the highest of the stars. The stars are the highest objects in view, and the sense, therefore, is, that God is infinitely exalted.

13. *And thou sayest, How doth God know?* That is, it follows from what you have said; or the opinion which you have advanced is *the same* as if you had affirmed this. How common it is to charge a man with holding what we *infer*, from something which he has advanced, he must hold, and then to proceed to argue *as if* he actually held that. The philosophy of this is plain. He advances a certain opinion. We infer at once that he can hold that only on certain grounds, or that if he holds that, he must hold something else also. We can see that if we held that opinion, we should also, for the sake of consistency, be compelled to hold something which seems to follow from it, and we cannot see how this can be avoided, and we at once charge him

doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?

with holding it. But the truth may be, that *he* has not seen that such consequences follow, or that he has some other way of accounting for the fact than we have; or that he may hold to the fact and yet deny wholly the consequences which legitimately follow from it. Now we have a right to show him *by argument* that his opinions, if he would follow them out, would lead to dangerous consequences, but we have a right to charge him with holding only what he *professes* to hold. He is not answerable for our inferences; and we have no right to charge them on him as being his real opinions. Every man has a right to avow what he actually believes, and to be regarded as holding that, and that only. ¶ *How doth God know?* That is, How can one so exalted see what is done on the distant earth, and reward and punish men according to their deserts? This opinion was actually held by many of the ancients. It was supposed that the supreme God did not condescend to attend to the affairs of mortals, but had committed the government of the earth to inferior beings. This was the foundation of the Gnostic philosophy, which prevailed so much in the East in the early ages of the Christian church. Milton puts a similar sentiment into the mouth of Eve, in her reflections after she had eaten the forbidden fruit:

And I, perhaps, am secret: heaven is high,  
High and remote from thence to see distinct  
Each thing on earth; and other care perhaps  
May have diverted from continual watch  
Our great Forbidd'ner, safe with all his spies  
about him. PAR. LOST, B. ix.

¶ *Can he judge through the dark cloud?* Can he look down through the clouds which interpose between man and him? Eliphaz could not see how Job could maintain his opinions without holding that this was impossible for God. He could see no other reason why God did not punish the wicked than because *he did not see them*, and he, therefore, charges this opinion on Job.

14 Thick clouds *are* a covering to him, that he seeth not; and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.

15 Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have

trodden?

16 Which were cut down out of time, whose <sup>1</sup> foundation was overflown with a flood;

<sup>1</sup> or, *a flood was poured upon their foundation.* Ge. 7. 10, &c. 2 Pe. 2. 5.

14. *Thick clouds are a covering to him.* This is to be understood as expressing what Eliphaz regarded as the sentiment of Job—that so thick clouds intervened between him and man that he could not take cognizance of what was going forward on earth. ¶ *And he walketh in the circuit of heaven.* Upon the arch of heaven, as it seems to be bent over our heads. He walks above that cerulean so high, that he cannot see what occurs on earth, and to punish mortals. This was not an uncommon sentiment among the ancients, though it is here, with the greatest injustice, attributed to Job. A similar sentiment is expressed by Lucretius, as quoted by Rosenmüller and Noyes:

“Omnis enim per se Divom natura, necesse est, Immortali ævo summâ cum pace fruatur, Semota a nostris rebus, sejunctaque longè. Nam privata dolore omni, privata periclis, Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga nostri, Nec benè promeritis capitur, nec tangitur irâ.”

Comp. Isa. xxix. 15.

15. *Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?* Hast thou seen what has happened in former times to wicked men? Job had maintained that God did not deal with men in this world according to their character. To meet this, Eliphaz now appeals to ancient facts, and especially refers to the deluge, when the wicked were cut off by a flood for their sins. Schultens, Dr. Good, Noyes, and Rieske, however, suppose that the word here rendered “mark,” means to *pursue*, or *imitate*, and that the sense is, “Are you willing to adopt the principles of those wicked men who lived in the time of the deluge?” But the sense is not materially affected. The general design is to refer Job to the case of the impious generation that was swept off by a flood. The judgments of God on them were a full refutation, in his view, of the sentiments of Job.

16. *Which were cut down.* Who were suddenly destroyed by a flood. On the word here used (פָּקַד), see Notes on ch. xvi. 8. It occurs only in that place and this. Its primary notion is that of drawing together or contracting—as the feet of a lamb or calf are drawn together and tied preparatory to being killed; and the meaning here is, probably, “who were huddled together by the waters,” or who were driven in heaps by the deluge, so rapidly and suddenly did it come upon them. ¶ *Out of time.* Heb., “And there was no time;” that is, it was done in a moment, or suddenly. No time was given them; no delay was granted. The floods rushed over them, and nothing could stay them. ¶ *Whose foundation was overflown.* Marg., or, *a flood was poured upon their foundation.* That is, all on which they relied was swept away. The word *foundation* refers to that on which their happiness and security rested, as a house rests on its foundation, and when that is swept away, the house falls. ¶ *With a flood.* Heb. (נָהָר), *river.* The word is commonly applied to a river; and in the Scriptures, by way of eminence, to the Euphrates. See Notes on Isa. vii. 20; viii. 7. It may be used, however, to denote a river which is swollen, and then a flood—and it is several times rendered *flood* in the Scriptures. Job xiv. 11; Jonah ii. 3 (where it means the sea); Josh. xxiv. 2, 3, 14, 15; Pa. lxvi. 6; Job xxviii. 11; Ps. xxiv. 2; xciii. 3; Cant. viii. 7. Prof. Lee supposes that the allusion here is to some overflowing of the Euphrates, but the reference seems to be decidedly to the deluge in the time of Noah. The *language* is such as would be used in referring to that, and the *fact* is just such an one as would be pertinent to the

17 Which <sup>a</sup> said unto God, Depart from us: and what can the Almighty do <sup>1</sup> for them?

18 Yet <sup>c</sup> he filled their houses

d c. 21. 14.    <sup>1</sup> or, to.    e Ac. 14. 17.

argument of Eliphaz. The fact was undoubtedly well known to all, so that a bare allusion to it would be enough.

17. Which said unto God, Depart from us. Notes, ch. xxi. 14. A very correct description of the old world. They had no wish to retain God in their knowledge. Probably Eliphaz here refers to what Job had said, ch. xxi. 14, 15. He had remarked, in describing the wicked, that they said unto God, "Depart from us," and yet they lived prosperously. "But see," says Eliphaz, "a case where they did this. It was done by the inhabitants of the world before the deluge, and their houses were filled, as you say the houses of the wicked are, with good things, but God swept them all suddenly away." ¶ And what can the Almighty do for them? Marg., or, to. That is, they demanded what the Almighty could do for them. They did not feel their dependence on him; they did not admit that they needed his aid; they cast off all reliance on him. This whole passage is a most sarcastic retort on what Job had said in ch. xxi. 14, 15. He had affirmed that though wicked men used this language, yet that they prospered. Eliphaz takes the same language and applies it to the sinners before the deluge, and says that they expressed themselves just in this manner. The language which Job puts into the mouths of the wicked, had, indeed, says Eliphaz, been used. But by whom? By those who lived in security and prosperity. "By the men before the deluge," says he, "the race that was so wicked that it was necessary to cut them off by the flood. These are the men to whose sentiments Job appeals; these the men with whom he has sympathy!"

18. Yet he filled their houses with good things. This is undoubtedly a biting sarcasm. Job had maintained that such men were prosperous. "Yes," says

with good things: but the counsel of the wicked is far from me.

19 The righteous see it, and are glad: and the innocent laugh them to scorn.

Eliphaz, "their houses were well filled! They were *signally* blessed and prospered!" ¶ But the counsel of the wicked is far from me. This is the very language of Job, ch. xxi. 16. It is here used sarcastically. "Far from me," you say, "be the counsel of the wicked. But you defend them, and attempt to show that they are the favorites of heaven! You attempt to prove that God must and will bless them! Far from me, say I, be the counsel of the wicked! With them I have no part, no lot. I will not defend them—I will not be their advocate!" The object is, to show that, notwithstanding all that Job had said, he was secretly the advocate of the wicked, and stood up as their friend.

19. The righteous see it, and are glad. See the destruction of the wicked. Comp. Rev. xv. 3, xvi. 7, xix. 1, 2. This is designed by Eliphaz, probably, not only to state a fact about the righteous of other times who saw the wicked punished, but also to vindicate his own conduct and that of his two friends in regard to Job. If the righteous of other times had rejoiced when the wicked were punished, they inferred that it was not improper for them to manifest similar rejoicings when God had overtaken one who was so signally depraved as they supposed Job to be. Their want of sympathy for him, therefore, they would defend by a reference to the conduct of the men of other times. There is a sense in which good men rejoice when the wicked are detected and punished. It is not (1) that they rejoice that the sin was committed; nor (2) that they rejoice in misery; nor (3) that they would not rejoice more if the wicked had been righteous, and had escaped suffering altogether. But it is the kind of joy which we have when a murderer, a robber, or a pirate is seized—when a counterfeiter is detected—when a man who prowls around

20 Whereas <sup>1</sup> our substance is not cut down, but <sup>2</sup> the remnant of them the fire consumeth.

<sup>1</sup> or, *estate*.

<sup>2</sup> or, *their excellency*.

the dwelling at night to murder its inmates is brought to punishment. It is joy, not that the sin was committed, but that the laws are executed; and who should not rejoice in that? We have joy in the character of an upright judge when he impartially and faithfully administers the laws; and why should we not rejoice in God when he does the same? We rejoice in the manifestation of truth and justice among men—why should we not in the exhibition of the same things in God? We rejoice in a police that can ferret out every form of iniquity, and bring offenders to justice; and why should we not rejoice in that government which is infinitely more perfect than any police ever was among men? ¶ *And the innocent laugh them to scorn.* This is another way of saying that they exult, or rejoice. Comp. Prov. i. 26, 27. No consideration can justify men in deriding and mocking those who are subjected to punishment; and it is by no means certain that the speaker meant to refer to such derision.

20. *Whereas our substance is not cut down.* Marg., or, *estate*. Gesenius supposes that this means our adversary or enemy. The word here used (עֹקֵץ) he regards as derived from עָקַץ,—to rise, to rise up; and, hence, it may have the sense of rising up against, or an enemy. So Noyes understands it, and renders it,

“Truly, our adversary is destroyed;  
And fire hath consumed his abundance.”

Rosenmüller accords with this, and it seems to me to be the correct view. According to this, it is the language of the righteous (ver. 19) when exulting over the punishment of the wicked, saying, “Our foe is cut down.” Jerome renders it, *Nonne succisa est erectio eorum*, etc. The LXX, “Has not their substance (ὕποστασις) disappeared?” The sense is not materially different. If the word *substance*, or *property*, is to be retained, it should be read as a question, and regarded as the language of

the righteous who exult. “Has not their substance been taken away, and has not the fire consumed their property?” Dr. Good strangely renders it, “For our tribe is not cut off.” ¶ *But the remnant of them.* Marg., *their excellency*. Heb., עֲרֵב. Jerome, *reliquias eorum*—“the remnants of them.” Sept., κατάλειμμα—the residue, or what is left. The Hebrew word (עֲרֵב) means the remainder, the residue, the rest; then, what is redundant, more than is needed, or that abounds; and then, *wealth*, the superabundant property which a man does not need for his own use or family. The word here probably means that which the rich sinner possessed. ¶ *The fire consumeth.* Or, hath consumed. It has been supposed by many that the allusion here is to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and it cannot be denied that such an allusion is possible. If it were certain that Job lived before that event, there could be little objection to such a supposition. The only objection would be, that a reference to such an event was not more prominent. It would be a case just in point in the argument of the three friends of Job, and one to which it might be supposed they would have appealed as decisive of the controversy. They lived in the vicinity. They could not have been strangers to so remarkable an occurrence, and it would have furnished just the argument which they wished, to prove that God punishes the wicked in this life. If they lived after that event, therefore, it is difficult to account for the fact, that they did not make a more distinct and prominent allusion to it in their argument. It is true, that the same remark may be made respecting the allusion to the flood, which was a case equally in point, and in reference to which the allusion, if it exist at all, is almost equally obscure. So far as the language here is concerned, the reference may be either to the destruction of Sodom, or to destruction by lightning, such as happened to the posses-



## 21 Acquaint now thyself with

sions of Job, ch. i. 16; and it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine which is correct. The *general* idea is, that the judgments of heaven, represented by fire, had fallen on the wicked, and that the righteous, therefore, had occasion to rejoice.

21. *Acquaint now thyself with him.* Marg., i. e., *with God*. Eliphaz takes it for granted now, that Job was a sinner wholly unreconciled to God, and unacquainted with him. This fact, he supposes, was the source of all his calamities. As long as he remained thus unreconciled to God, he must be miserable. He proceeds, therefore, in a most beautiful manner, to exhort him to be at peace with God, and portrays the benefits which would result from such a reconciliation. There are few passages in the Bible of more exquisite beauty than this, and nothing could be sounder advice, on the supposition that Job was, as he supposed, a stranger to God. In this beautiful exhortation, he shows (1) what he means by becoming acquainted with God (vs. 21, 22, 23); and then (2) what would be the happy results of such reconciliation, vs. 24—30. The word rendered *acquaint thyself* (הִתְחַבֵּר from חָבַר) means, properly, *to dwell*, to be familiar with any one, to associate with one—from the idea of dwelling in the same tent or house; and in Hiphil, the form here used, to become familiar with any one, to be on terms of friendship. The meaning here is, "Secure the friendship of God. Become truly acquainted with him. Be reconciled to him. You are now estranged. You have no just view of him. You murmur and complain, and you are suffering under his displeasure as a sinner. But it is not too late to repent, and to return to him; and in so doing you will find peace." An acquaintance with God, in the sense of this passage, implies (1) a correct knowledge of his true character, and (2) reconciliation with him. There are two

<sup>1</sup> him, and be at peace: <sup>f</sup> thereby good shall come unto thee.

<sup>1</sup> i. e., *God*.

*f* Is. 27. 5. Ph. 4. 7.

great difficulties among men in regard to God. The first is, that they have no just views of his real character. They think him harsh, stern, tyrannical. They regard his law as severe, and its penalty as unjust. They think his government to be arbitrary, and himself to be unworthy of confidence. This erroneous view must be corrected before men can be reconciled to him—for how can they be brought to lay aside their opposition to him while they regard him as unjust and severe? Secondly, even when the character of God is explained, and his true character is set before men, they are opposed to it. They are opposed to him because he is so holy. Loving sin, they cannot love one who has no sin, and who frowns on evil; and this opposition to the *real* character of God must be removed before they can be reconciled to him. This requires a change of heart—a change from sin to holiness; and this is the work performed by regeneration. ¶ *And be at peace.* There can be no peace while you maintain a warfare with God. It is a war against your Maker, where he has control over your conscience, your intellect, your body, and all which can affect your welfare; and while this is maintained, there can be no peace. If the mind is reconciled to him, there will be peace. Peace of mind *always* follows reconciliation where there has been a variance, and nowhere is the peace so entire and full of joy as when man feels that he is reconciled to God. Eliphaz here has stated a doctrine which has been confirmed by all the subsequent revelations in the Bible, and by the experience of all those who have become reconciled to God. Comp. Notes on Rom. v. 1. It is peace, as opposed to the agitation and conflict of the mind before; peace resulting from acquiescence in the claims of God; peace in the belief that he is wholly right, and worthy of confidence; and peace in the assurances of his friendship and favor for ever. This doctrine is

22 Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up<sup>s</sup> his words in thine heart.

23 If thou return<sup>h</sup> to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up,

<sup>g</sup> Ps. 119. 11.

<sup>h</sup> Hos. 14. 1, 2.

seems, was thus understood in the early ages of the world, and, indeed, must have been known as early as religion existed after the fall. Man became alienated from God by the apostasy; peace was to be found again only by returning to God, and in reconciliation to him. ¶ *Thereby good shall come unto thee.* The benefits which he supposed would result from such reconciliation, he proceeds to state in the following verses. They relate chiefly to temporal prosperity, or to proofs of the divine favor in this life. This was in accordance with the views which then prevailed, and especially with their limited and obscure conceptions of the future state. They saw a part—we see more; and yet we by no means see all. The *good* which results from reconciliation with God consists in (1) pardon of sin; (2) peace of conscience; (3) the assurance that we shall have all that is needful in this life; (4) support in trial; (5) peace and triumph in death; (6) a part in the resurrection of the just; and (7) a crown incorruptible and undefiled in heaven. No man was ever injured by becoming reconciled to God; no one is reconciled to him who is not made a better and a happier man in this life, and who will not be crowned with immortal glory hereafter.

22. *Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth.* Listen to his commands, and obey his precepts. ¶ *And lay up his words in thine heart.* Embrace his truth, and do not forget it. Let it abide with you, and let it influence your secret feelings and the purposes of the soul.

23. *If thou return to the Almighty.* Assuming that he was an impenitent sinner, and wholly unreconciled to him. ¶ *Thou shalt be built up.* A figure taken from building up a house, in contradistinction from pulling one down, and denoting that he would be pros-

per and happy. ¶ *Thou shalt put away iniquity.* Rosenmüller, Good, Noyes, and Wemyss suppose correctly, as it seems to me, that the word “if” is to be understood here to complete the sense—“if thou shalt put away iniquity.” ¶ *From thy tabernacles.* From thy tent, or dwelling.

24 Then shalt thou lay up gold<sup>1</sup> as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Ti. 2. 19.

<sup>1</sup> or, on the dust.

pered and happy. ¶ *Thou shalt put away iniquity.* Rosenmüller, Good, Noyes, and Wemyss suppose correctly, as it seems to me, that the word “if” is to be understood here to complete the sense—“if thou shalt put away iniquity.” ¶ *From thy tabernacles.* From thy tent, or dwelling.

24. *Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust.* Marg., or, “on the dust.” Dr. Good renders this, “Thou shalt then count thy treasure as dust”—implying that he would have much of it. Noyes, “Cast to the dust thy gold”—implying that he would throw his gold away as of no account, and put his dependence on God alone. Kimchi, and, after him, Grotius, suppose that it means, “Thy gold thou shalt regard no more than dust, and gold of Ophir no more than the stones of the brook; God shall be to thee better than gold and silver.” The editor of the Pictorial Bible supposes that there is here a distinct reference to the sources from which gold was formerly obtained, as being washed down among the stones of the brooks. The word rendered *gold* here (בָּזָר) is from בָּזַר—to cut off, Ps. lxxvi. 12, and was properly applied to the ore of precious metals in the rude state, as cut or dug out of mines. Hence, it properly refers to the metals in their crude state, and before they were subjected to the fire. Then it comes to mean precious metals, and is parallel with gold of Ophir in the other hemistich. The word occurs only in the following places: Job xxii. 24, xxxvi. 19, where it is rendered *gold*, and Job xxii. 25, where it is rendered *defence*. The literal translation here would be, “Cast to the dust the precious metals; on the stones of the brooks [the gold of] Ophir.” The Vulgate renders it, “He shall give for earth flint, and for flint golden torrents.” The LXX, “Thou shalt be

25 Yea, the Almighty shall be thy <sup>1</sup> defence, and thou shalt have <sup>2</sup> plenty of silver.

<sup>1</sup> or, gold.

<sup>2</sup> silver of strength.

placed on a mount in a rock, and as a rock of the torrent of Ophir." Chald. "And thou shalt place upon the dust thy strong tower (כֶּתֶד הַקֵּץ), and as a rock of the torrents the gold of Ophir." The word here is probably synonymous with *precious treasure*, whether consisting in gold or silver; and the idea is, that he should cast to the dust all that treasure, or regard it as valueless; that he should cease to make it an object of solicitude to gain it, and then the Almighty would be to him a treasure of more value than gold. According to this, the idea is, not that he would be recompensed with gold and silver as the consequence of returning to God, but that God would afford him more happiness than he had found in the wealth which he had sought, and on which Eliphaz supposed his heart had been set. He regarded Job as covetous of property, as mourning over that which he had lost, and he entreats him now to cease to grieve on account of that, and to come and put his trust in God. ¶ *And the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks.* Or, rather, "Cast the gold of Ophir to the stones of the valley, or let it remain in its native valley among the stones of the brook, as of no more value than they are." There is, probably, allusion here to the fact, that gold was then commonly found in such places, as it is often now. It was washed down by mountain torrents, and lodged among the stones of the valley, and was thence collected, and the sand being washed out, the gold remained. Ophir is uniformly mentioned in the Scriptures as a place abounding in gold, and as well known. See 1 Kings ix. 28; 2 Chron. viii. 18, ix. 10; 1 Kings x. 11, xxii. 48; 1 Chron. xxix. 4. Much perplexity has been felt in reference to its situation, and the difficulty has not been entirely removed. In regard to the opinions which have been held on the point, the reader may consult my Notes on Isa. xiii. 12, the

26 For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face unto God.

Note in the Pictorial Bible on 2 Chron. xx. 36, and the Dissertation of Martin Lipenius *de Ophir*, in Ugolin's Thesaur. Sacr. Ant., tom. vii., pp. 262—387; also, the Dissertation of J. C. Wichmanshausen, *de navigatione Ophiritica*, and Reland's Dissertation *de Ophir* in the same volume. From the mention of this place at a period so early as the time of Job, it is reasonable to suppose that it was not a very remote region, as there is no evidence that voyages were made then to distant countries, or that the knowledge of geography was very extensive. The *presumption* would be, that it was in the vicinity of Arabia.

25. *Yea, the Almighty shall be.* Or, rather, "then the Almighty shall be" —הֵיכָה. The meaning is, that if he would return to God, and cast off his anxiety for gold, then the Almighty would be his real treasure, and would impart to him solid happiness. ¶ *Thy defence.* Marg., gold. The margin is the more correct translation. The word is the same which occurs in the previous verse (בָּצָר), and there rendered *gold*. The word may have the sense of *defence*, as the verb (בָּצָר) is often used with such a reference. Num. xiii. 28; Deut. i. 28; iii. 5; ix. 1, *et al.* The meaning of such places, where the word is applied to walled towns or fortified places, is, that the enemy was, by means of walls, cut off from approach. Here, however, the idea of *gold or treasure* better suits the connexion, and the meaning is, that God would be to him an invaluable *treasure*, or source of happiness. ¶ *And thou shalt have plenty of silver.* Marg., silver of strength. The correct idea, however, is, "and the Almighty shall be treasures of silver unto thee;" that is, he shall be better to you than an abundance of the precious metals. The Hebrew is, literally, "And silver of treasures unto thee."

26. *Shalt thou have thy delight in the*

27 Thou <sup>k</sup> shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows.

28 Thou shalt also decree <sup>1</sup> a thing, and it shall be established

*k* Ps. 66. 17—20.

*l* Mat. 21. 22.

*Almighty.* Instead of complaining of him as you now do, you would then find calm enjoyment in contemplating his character and his moral government. This is a correct account of the effects of reconciliation. He who becomes truly “acquainted” with God has pleasure in his existence and attributes; in his law and administration. No longer disposed to complain, he confides in him when he is afflicted; flees to him when he is persecuted; seeks him in the day of prosperity; prefers him to all that this world can give, and finds his supremest joys in turning away from all created good to hold communion with the Uncreated One. ¶ *And shalt lift up thy face unto God.* An emblem of prosperity, happiness, and conscious innocence. We hang our face down when we are conscious of guilt; we bow the head in adversity. When conscious of uprightness; when blessed with prosperity, and when we have evidence that we are the children of God, we look up toward heaven. This was the natural condition of men—made to look upwards, while all other animals look grovelling on the earth. So Milton describes the creation of man:

“There wanted yet the master-work, the end  
Of all yet done; a creature, who, not prone  
And brute as other creatures, but endued  
With sanctity of reason, might erect  
His stature, and upright with front serene  
Govern the rest, self-knowing; and from thence  
Magnanimous to correspond with heaven,  
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good  
Descends; thither with heart, and voice, and  
eyes,  
Directed in devotion, to adore  
And worship God supreme, who made him  
chief  
Of all his works.” PAR. LOST, B. vii.

The classic reader will instantly recollect the description in Ovid:

“Pronaque cum spectent animalia cætera ter-  
ram,

unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways.

29 When *men* are cast down, then thou shalt say, *There is lifting up*; and he shall save <sup>1</sup> the humble <sup>m</sup> person.

<sup>1</sup> *him that hath low eyes.*

*m* 1 Pe. 5. 5.

Os homini sublime dedit; cœlumque tueri  
Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus.”

META. i. 84.

27. *Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him.* God would then hear him, for he would be righteous. This was one of the blessings which would follow reconciliation. It is, in fact, one of the blessings of a return to God. He hears the cry of his people, and answers their supplications. To be permitted to go to God and to tell him all our wants, to plead for all we need, and to implore blessings on our families and friends, is a privilege of far higher value than anything which wealth can bestow; is worth more than all the honours of this world. ¶ *And thou shalt pay thy vows.* That is, thy vows shall be accepted; thou shalt obtain those blessings for which thou didst make thy vows.

28. *Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee.* Thou shalt form a purpose or plan, and it shall not be frustrated. It shall not be opposed by the events of divine Providence, but whatever you undertake shall prosper. ¶ *And the light shall shine upon thy ways.* Thou shalt be prospered in all things, instead of being overtaken with calamity.

29. *When men are cast down.* The meaning of this is, probably, when men are usually cast down, or in the times of trial and calamity, which prostrate others, you shall find support. You shall then be enabled to say, “there is lifting up, or there is support.” Or, more probably still, it may mean, “in times when others are cast down and afflicted, thou shalt be able to raise them up, or to aid them. Thou shalt be able to go to them and say, ‘Be of good cheer. Do not be cast down. There is consolation.’ And thou shalt be able to procure important blessings for them by thy counsels and prayers.”

30 He <sup>1</sup> shall deliver the island

<sup>1</sup> or, *the innocent shall deliver the island*, Ge. 18. 26.

See Notes on ver. 30. ¶ *And he shall save the humble person.* That is, either, "Thou shalt save the humble person," by a change from the second person to the third, which is not uncommon in Hebrew; or, "Thou shalt be able from thine own experience to say, *He*—i. e., *God*—will save the humble person, or the one that is cast down." Marg., *him that hath low eyes.* The Hebrew is like the margin. In affliction the eyes are cast upon the ground; and so, also, a casting the eyes to the ground is indicative of dejection, of humility, or of modesty. It refers here to one who experiences trials; and Eliphaz says that Job would be able to save such an one; that is, to support him in his afflictions, and furnish the helps necessary to restore him again to comfort.

30. *He shall deliver the island of the innocent.* Marg., *the innocent shall deliver the island.* Never was there a more unhappy translation than this; and it is quite clear that our translators had no intelligible idea of the meaning of the passage. What can be meant by "saving the island of the innocent?"

The word rendered *island* (אִי) commonly means, indeed, an island, or a maritime country. See Notes on Isa. xx. 6; xli. 1. It is, however, used as a negative in 1 Sam. iv. 21, in the name *I-chabod*—אִי־כָבוֹד. "And she named the child *I-chabod* (marg., i. e., *where is the glory?* or, *there is no glory*), saying, the glory is departed from Israel." This sense is frequent in the Rabbinic Hebrew, where it is used as connected with an adjective in a primitive sense, like the English *un*. It is probably an abbreviated form of (אֵין) *not, nothing*; and is used here as a negative to qualify the following word, "He shall deliver him that is *not* innocent." So it is rendered by the Chaldee, by Le Clerc, Rosenmüller, Gesenius, Noyes, and others. The Vulgate and the Septuagint render it, "He shall deliver the innocent." The sense is, that the man who returns to God, and who is regarded

of the innocent: and it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands.

by him as his friend, will be able to intercede for the guilty, and to save them from the punishment which they deserved. His prayers and intercessions will be heard in their behalf, and on his account favors will be shown to them, even when they did not personally deserve them. This sentiment accords with that expressed in Gen. xviii. 26, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes." Ezek. xiv. 14, "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls." Comp. Ezek. xxii. 30; Jer. v. 1. The sentiment, also, had a beautiful illustration, though one which Eliphaz did not here think of, in his own case and that of his friends, where this very Job, to whom he was giving this counsel, was directed to intercede for them. Ch. xlii. 7, 8. The sentiment, indeed, is found everywhere in the Scriptures, that the righteous are permitted to pray for others, and that they are thus the means of bringing down important blessings on them. In answer to those prayers, multitudes are saved from calamity here, and will be brought to eternal life hereafter. ¶ *And it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands.* Or, rather, *he, i. e., the wicked, for whom you pray, will be delivered by the pureness of thine hands.* That is, God will save him in answer to the prayers of a righteous man. Your upright and holy life; your pure hands stretched out in supplication, shall be the means of saving him. No one can tell how many blessings are conferred on wicked men *because* the righteous pray for them. No one can tell how many a wicked son is spared, and ultimately saved, in answer to the intercessions of a holy parent; nor can the wicked world yet know how much it owes its preservation, and the numberless blessings which it enjoys, to the intercessions of the saints. It is *one* of the innumerable blessings of being a child of God *thus* to be permitted to be the means of

bringing down blessings on others, and saving sinners from ruin. All the friends of God may thus confer unspeakable benefits to others; and they who have "an interest at the throne of grace" should plead without ceasing for the salvation of guilty and dying

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## ANALYSIS OF CHAPTERS XXIII. AND XXIV.

THESE two chapters contain the answer of Job to the last speech of Eliphaz. The address is that of a mind agitated by deep and conflicting emotions. It consists in part in the expression of those emotions, and in part in an endeavour once more to convince his friends of the falsehood of their positions. The address comprises the following topics.—

He expresses the depth of his sorrows, and says that his complaint is more bitter than he had yet expressed, ch. xxiii. 2. He then repeats his earnest desire to carry his cause before God, since he could obtain no justice from men, but he knows not where to find him. He is assured that if he could get his cause before him, justice would be done him, vs. 3—9. In this perplexity, however, he consoles himself with the reflection that though he had not the opportunity of pleading his cause as he wished before God, yet that he knew that he was sincere, and would yet appear for his vindication, and bring him forth as gold, vs. 10—12. Yet, he says, he is troubled at the dealings of God with him, notwithstanding his consciousness of integrity. He trembles at the contemplation of a Being who thus carries forward his eternal and unchangeable purpose; who has all power to execute his designs; and whose judgments are so fearful, vs. 13—17.

Having thus given vent to his feelings, he returns to the argument, ch. xxiv. He attempts by one more effort to convince his adversaries that it was not a *matter of fact* that God dealt with the wicked in this life as they deserved, and that *in fact* many of them lived in prosperity. He denies that judgments come universally upon wicked men, and maintains that they do not even frequently come; and he produces a catalogue of enormous crimes, and shows that they who committed them actually lived and were prospered. He specifies those who remove the landmarks; those who plunder flocks and herds; those who oppress the fatherless and the widow; those who are cruel; those who pluck the fatherless from the breast, and take a pledge of the poor; he mentions the murderer, the adulterer, the thief, and says that all these in fact live and flourish. Yet he maintains that, notwithstanding their present prosperity, they shall be brought down, and meet the rewards of their wickedness hereafter. As all this was indisputable, it ended the controversy. Eliphaz and Zophar made no further reply, and Bildad only made (ch. xxv.) a feeble effort, without attempting to meet the facts, and uttered some vague generalities which showed that he in fact had no more to say.

THEN Job answered and said,  
2 Even to day is my com-

plaint bitter: my <sup>1</sup> stroke is heavier than my groaning.

hand.

2. *Even to day.* At the present time. I am not relieved. You afford me no consolation. All that you say only aggravates my woes. ¶ *My complaint.* See Notes on ch. xxi. 3. ¶ *Bitter.* Sad, melancholy, distressing. The meaning is, not that he made bitter complaints in the sense which those words would naturally convey, or that he meant to find fault with God, but that his case was a hard one. His friends furnished him no relief, and he had in vain endeavored to bring his cause before God. This is now, as he proceeds to state, the principal cause of

his difficulty. He knows not where to find God; he cannot get his cause before him. ¶ *My stroke.* Marg., as in Heb., *hand*; that is, the hand that is upon me, or the calamity that is inflicted upon me. The *hand* is represented as the instrument of inflicting punishment, or causing affliction. See Notes on ch. xix. 21. ¶ *Heavier than my groaning.* My sighs bear no proportion to my sufferings. They are no adequate expression of my woes. If you think I complain; if I am heard to groan, yet the sufferings which I endure are far beyond what these would seem to indi-

3 Oh <sup>a</sup> that I knew where I might find him! *that* I might come *even* to his seat!

4 I would order *my* cause <sup>b</sup> before him, and fill my mouth

<sup>a</sup> Is. 26. 8. Je. 14. 7.

<sup>b</sup> Is. 43. 26.

cate. Sighs and groans are not improper. They are prompted by nature, and they furnish *some* relief to a sufferer. But they should not be (1) with a spirit of murmuring or complaining; (2) they should not be *beyond* what our sufferings demand, or the proper expression of our sufferings. They should not be such as to lead others to suppose we suffer more than we actually do. (3) They should—when they are extorted from us by the severity of suffering—lead us to look to that world where no groan will ever be heard.

3. *O that I knew where I might find him!* Where I might find God. He had often expressed a wish to bring his cause directly before God, and to be permitted to plead his cause there. See Notes on ch. xiii. 3, 20, seq. But this he had not yet been able to do. The argument had been with his three friends, and he saw that there was no use in attempting further to convince them. If he could get the cause before God, and be allowed to plead it there, he felt assured that justice would be done him. But he had not been able to do this. God had not come forth in any visible and public manner as he wished, so that the cause could be fairly tried before such a tribunal, and he was in darkness. The *language* here used will express the condition of a pious man in the times of spiritual darkness. He cannot find God. He has no near access as he once had to him. In such a state he anxiously seeks to find God, but he cannot. There is no light and no comfort to this soul. This language may further describe the state of one who is conscious of uprightness, and who is exposed to the suspicion or the unkind remarks of the world. His character is attacked; his motives are impugned; his designs are suspected, and no one is disposed to do him justice.

with arguments.

5 I would know the words *which* he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me.

In such a state, he feels that God alone will do him justice. He knows the sincerity of his heart, and he can safely commit his cause to him. It is always the privilege of the calumniated and the slandered to make an appeal to the divine tribunal, and to feel that whatever injustice our fellow-men may be disposed to do us, there is One who will never do a wrong. ¶ *That I might come even to his seat.* To his throne, or tribunal. Job wished to carry the cause directly before him. Probably he desired some manifestation of God—such as he was afterwards favored with—when God would declare his judgment on the whole matter of the controversy.

4. *I would order my cause before him.* Comp. Notes on Isa. xlii. 26. That is, I would arrange my arguments, or plead my cause, as one does in a court of justice. I would suggest the considerations which would show that I am not guilty in the sense charged by my friends, and that notwithstanding my calamities, I am the real friend of God. ¶ *And fill my mouth with arguments.* Probably he means that he would appeal to the evidence furnished by a life of benevolence and justice, that he was not a hypocrite or a man of distinguished wickedness, as his friends maintained.

5. *I would know the words which he would answer me.* That is, I wish to understand what would be his decision in the case—and what would be his judgment in regard to me. That was of infinitely more importance than any opinion which *man* could form, and Job was anxious to have the matter decided by a tribunal which could not err. Why should we not desire to know exactly what God thinks of us, and what estimate he has formed of our character? There is no information so valuable to

6 Will <sup>c</sup> he plead against me with *his* great power? No; but he would put *strength* in me.

7 There the righteous might  
c Is. 57. 16.

us as that would be; for on *his* estimate hangs our eternal doom, and yet there is nothing which men more instinctively dread than to know what God thinks of their character. It would be well for each one to ask himself, *Why is it so?*

6. *Will he plead against me with his great power?* "Will he make use of his mere *power* to overwhelm me and confound me? Will he take advantage of omnipotence to triumph over me, instead of argument and justice? No: he will not do it. The discussion would be fair. He would hear what I have to say, and would decide according to truth. Though he is Almighty, yet he would not take advantage of that to prostrate and confound me." When Job (ch. xiii. 3) wished to carry the cause directly before God, he asked of Him two conditions only. One was, that he would take off his hand from him, or remove his afflictions for a time, that he might be able to manage his own cause; and the other was, that He would not take advantage of his power to overwhelm him in the debate, and prevent his making a fair statement of his case. See Notes on ch. xiii. 20, 21. He here expresses his firm conviction that his wish in this respect would be granted. He would listen, says he, to what I have to say in my defence as if I were an equal. ¶ *No; but he would put strength in me.* The word *strength* is not improperly supplied by our translators. It means that he would enable him to make a fair presentation of his cause. So far from taking advantage of his mere *power* to crush him, and thus obtain an ascendancy in the argument, he would rather *strengthen* him, that he might be able to make his case as strong as possible. He would rather aid him, though presenting his own cause in the controversy, than seek to weaken his arguments, or so to awe him by his dread majesty as to prevent

dispute with him; so should I be delivered for ever from my judge.

8 Behold, I go forward, but he is not *there*; and backward, but I cannot perceive him:

his making the case as strong as it might be. This indicates remarkable confidence in God.

7. *There the righteous might dispute with him.* One who is conscious of his integrity might carry his cause there, with the assurance that he would be heard, and that justice would be done him. There can be no doubt that Job here refers to himself, though he speaks in the third person, and advances this as a general proposition. ¶ *So should I be delivered for ever from my judge.* From him who would judge or condemn me (עֲדָתִי). He does not here refer to God, as if he would be delivered from him, but to *any one* who would attempt to judge and condemn him, as his friends had done. The meaning is, that having, as he confidently expected he would, obtained the verdict of God in his favor, he would be ever after free from condemnation. The decision would be final. There was no higher tribunal, and no one would dare to condemn him afterwards. This shows his consciousness of integrity. It may be applied to ourselves—to all. If we can obtain, at the last day, when our cause shall be brought before God, the divine verdict in our favour, it will settle the matter for ever. No one, after that, will condemn us; never again shall our character or conduct be put on trial. The divine decision of that day will settle the question to all eternity. How momentous, then, is it that we should so live as to be acquitted in that day, and to have *an eternal sentence in our favour!*

8. *Behold, I go forward.* The meaning of these verses is, I go in all directions, but I cannot find God. I am excluded from the trial which I seek, and I cannot bring my cause to his throne. Job expresses his earnest desire to see some visible manifestation of the Deity, and to be permitted to argue his cause in his presence. But he says he sought



9 On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold

this in vain. He looked to all points of the compass where he might rationally expect to find God, but all in vain. The terms here used refer to the points of the compass, and should have been so rendered. The Oriental geographers considered themselves as facing the East, instead of the North, as we do. Of course, the West was behind them, the South on the right hand, and on the left the North. This was a more natural position than ours, as day begins in the East, and it is natural to turn the face in that direction. There is no reason why our maps should be made so as to require us to face the North, except that such is the custom. The Hebrew custom, in this respect, is found also in the notices of geography in other nations. The same thing prevails among the Hindoos. Among them, Para, or Purra, signifying "before," denotes the East; Aparā and Paschima, meaning "behind," the West; Dacshina, or "the right hand," the South; and Bama, or "the left hand," the North. See Wilford's Inquiry respecting the Holy Isles in the West, Asiatic Researches, vol. viii. p. 275. The same thing occurred among the ancient Irish. See an Essay on the Antiquity of the Irish Language, by an unknown author, Dublin, 1772. Comp. on this subject, Rosenmüller's Alterthumskunde i. s. 136—144. The same custom prevailed among the Mongols. Gesenius. On the notices of the science of geography exhibited in the book of Job, comp. Intro. § viii. 2, 3. The phrase, therefore, "Behold, I go forward," means, "I go to the East. I look toward the rising of the sun. I see there the most wonderful of the works of the Creator in the glories of the sun, and I go towards it in hopes of finding there some manifestation of God. But I find him not, and, disappointed, I turn to other directions." Most of the ancient versions render this *the East*. Thus the Vulgate, *Si ad Orientem iero*. The Chaldee *לְיָמֵי הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ*, *to the sun-rising*. ¶ But

him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him:

he is not there. There is no manifestation of God, no coming forth to meet me, and to hear my cause. ¶ And backward (*אָחֲרָיִם*). To the West—for this was behind the individual when he stood looking to the East. Sometimes the West is denoted by this term *behind* (*אָחֲרָיִם*), and sometimes by *the sea* (*יָם*), because the Mediterranean was at the West of Palestine and Arabia. See Notes on Isa. xlix. 12; Comp. Ex. x. 19, xxvii. 13, xxxviii. 12; Gen. xxviii. 14. ¶ But I cannot perceive him. The meaning is, "Disappointed in the East, the region of the rising sun, I turn with longing to the West, the region of his setting, and hope, as his last beams fade from the view, that I shall be permitted to behold some ray that shall reveal God to my soul. Before the night settles down upon the world, emblem of the darkness in my soul, I would look upon the last lingering ray, and hope that in that I may see God. In that vast region of the West, illuminated by the setting sun, I would hope somewhere to find him; but I am disappointed there. The sun withdraws his beams, and darkness steals on, and the world, like my soul, is enveloped in gloom. I can see no indications of the presence of God coming forth to give me an opportunity to argue my cause before him."

9. On the left hand. That is, in the North—at the left hand when the face was turned to the East. So the Chaldee, *מִיָּמֵי הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ*—on the North. The other versions, the Vulgate, the Septuagint, the Syriac, Castellio, Luther, &c., render it *on the left hand*. The common term among the Hebrews for the North is *צִפְּתָן*—*tzaphon* (from *צָפַן*—to hide, or conceal), meaning the hidden, concealed, or dark region, since the ancients regarded the North as the seat of gloom and darkness (Hom. Od. ix. 25, seq.), while they supposed the South to be illuminated by the sun. Gesenius. Frequently, however, as here, the word "left," or "left hand," is used. The region of

10 But he knoweth the way

the North is intended. ¶ *Where he doth work.* Where there are such wonderful manifestations of his majesty and glory. May Job here not refer to the *Aurora Borealis*, the remarkable display of the power of God which is seen in those regions? May he not have felt that there was some special reason why he might hope to meet with God in that quarter, or to see him manifest himself amidst the brilliant lights that play along the sky, as if to precede or accompany him? And when he had looked to the splendor of the rising sun, and the glory of his setting, in vain, was it not natural to turn his eye to the *next* remarkable manifestation, as he supposed, of God, in the glories of the Northern lights, and to expect to find him there? There is reason to think that the ancient Chaldeans, and other heathens, regarded the regions of the North, illuminated with these celestial splendors, as the peculiar residence of the gods (see Notes on Isa. xiv. 13), and it seems probable that Job may have had allusion to some such prevailing opinion. ¶ *But I cannot behold him.* I can see the exhibition of remarkable splendor, but still God is unseen. He does not come amidst those glories to give me an opportunity to carry my cause before him. The meaning, then, of this is, "Disappointed in the East and the West, I turn to the North. There I have been accustomed to witness extraordinary manifestations of his magnificence and glory. There beautiful constellations circle the pole. There the Aurora plays, and seems to be the manifestation of the glory of God. Next to the glory of the rising and setting sun, I turn to those brilliant lights, to see if there I may not find my God, but in vain. Those lights are cold and chilly, and reveal no God to my soul. Disappointed, then, I turn to the last point, the South, to see if I can find him there." ¶ *He hideth himself on the right hand.* On the South. The South was to the ancients an unknown region. The deserts of Arabia, indeed,

that <sup>1</sup> I take: *when* <sup>d</sup> he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

<sup>1</sup> is with me.

d 1 Pe. 1. 7.

stretched away in that region, and they were partially known, and they had some knowledge that the sea was beyond. But they regarded the regions farther to the South, if there was land there, as wholly impassable and uninhabitable on account of the heat. The knowledge of geography was slowly acquired, and, of course, it is impossible to tell what were the views which prevailed on the subject in the time of Job. That there was little accuracy of information about remote countries must be regarded as an indisputable fact; and, probably, they had little conception of distant parts of the earth, except that formed by conjecture. Interesting details of the views of the ancients on this subject may be found in the *Encyclopædia of Geography*, vol. i. pp. 10—68. Compare particularly the Notes on ch. xxvi. 10. The earth was regarded as encompassed with waters, and the distant southern regions, on account of the impossibility of passing through the heat of the torrid zone, were supposed to be inaccessible. To those hidden and unknown realms, Job says he now turned, when he had in vain looked to each other quarter of the heavens, to see if he could find some manifestation of God. Yet he looked to that quarter equally in vain. God *hid* or *concealed* himself in those inaccessible regions, so that he could not approach him. The meaning is, "I am also disappointed here. He hides himself in that distant land. In the burning and impassable wastes which stretch themselves to an unknown extent there, I cannot find him. The feet of mortals cannot traverse those burning plains, and there I cannot approach him. To whatever point of the compass I turn, I am left in equal darkness." What a striking description is this of the darkness that sometimes comes over the Christian's soul, prompting to the language, "O that I knew where I *might* find him! That I *could* come to his throne!"

10. *But he knoweth the way that I take.* Marg., "is with me." That is, "I have

11 My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined.

12 Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his

the utmost confidence in him. Though I cannot see him, yet he sees me, and he knows my integrity; and whatever men may say, or however they may misunderstand my character, yet he is acquainted with me, and I have the fullest confidence that he will do me justice."

¶ When he hath tried me. When he has subjected me to all the tests of character which he shall choose to apply. ¶ I shall come forth as gold. As gold that is tried in the crucible, and that comes forth the more pure the intenser is the heat. The application of fire to it serves to separate every particle of impurity or alloy, and leaves only the pure metal. So it is with trials applied to the friend of God; and we may remark (1.) That all real piety will bear any test that may be applied to it, as gold will bear any degree of heat without being injured or destroyed. (2.) That the effect of all trials is to purify piety, and make it more bright and valuable, as is the effect of applying intense heat to gold. (3.) There is often much alloy in the piety of a Christian, as there is in gold, that needs to be removed by the fiery trial of affliction. Nothing else will remove it but trial, as nothing will be so effectual a purifier of gold as intense heat. (4.) A true Christian should not dread trial. It will not hurt him. He will be the more valuable for his trials, as gold is for the application of heat. There is no danger of destroying true piety. It will live in the flames, and will survive the raging heat that shall yet consume the world.

11. *My foot hath held his steps.* Roberts, in his Oriental Illustrations, and the Editor of the Pictorial Bible, suppose that there is an allusion here to the active, grasping power which the Orientals have in their feet and toes. By constant usage, they accustom themselves to make use of them in holding things in a manner which to us seems almost incredible, and they make the toes perform

lips; I<sup>e</sup> have<sup>1</sup> esteemed the words of his mouth more than my<sup>2</sup> necessary food.<sup>f</sup>

<sup>e</sup> Ps. 19. 9, 10. <sup>1</sup> hid, or, laid up.  
<sup>2</sup> or, appointed portion. <sup>f</sup> Je. 15. 16.

almost the work of fingers. We bind ours fast from early childhood in our close shoes, and they become useless except for the purpose of walking; but the Orientals use theirs differently. They seize upon an object with their toes, and hold it fast. If in walking along they see anything on the ground which they desire to pick up, instead of stooping, as we would, they seize it with their toes, and lift it up. Alypulle, a Kandian chief, was about to be beheaded. When he arrived at the place of execution, he looked round for some object on which to seize, and saw a small shrub, and seized it with his toes, and held it fast in order to be firm while the executioner did his office. Roberts. So an Arab in treading firmly, or in taking a determined stand, seems to lay hold of, to grasp the ground with his toes, giving a fixedness of position inconceivable to those whose feet are cramped by the use of tight shoes. This may be the meaning here, that Job had fixed himself firmly in the footsteps of God, and had adhered tenaciously to him; or, as it is rendered by Dr. Good, "In his steps will I rivet my feet." ¶ And not declined. Turned aside.

12. *Neither have I gone back.* I have not put away or rejected. ¶ *The commandment of his lips.* That which he has spoken, or which has proceeded out of his mouth. ¶ *I have esteemed.* Marg., *hid, or, laid up.* The Heb. is, "I have hid," as we hide or lay up that which is valuable. It is a word often applied to laying up treasures, or concealing them so that they would be safe. ¶ *More than my necessary food.* Marg., "or, appointed portion." Dr. Good renders it, "In my bosom have I laid up the words of his mouth." So Noyes, "The words of his mouth I have treasured up in my bosom." So Wemyss; and so it is rendered in the Vulgate, and by the LXX. The variety in the translation has arisen from the difference of

13 But he *is* in one *mind*, and who can turn him? and *what* his soul desireth, even *that* he doeth.

reading in regard to the Hebrew word *חֶלֶק*. Instead of this meaning "more than my portion" or "allowance," the Sept. and Vulgate appear to have read *חֶלֶק*, in my bosom. But there is no authority for the change, and there seems to be no reason for it. The word *חֶלֶק*, *hloq*, means something decreed, designated, appointed; then an appointed portion, as of labor, Ex. v. 14; then of food—an allowance of food, Prov. xxx. 8; then a limit, bound, law, statute, &c. It seems to me that the word here means *purpose, intention, rule, or design*, and that the idea is, that he had regarded the commands of God more *than his own purposes*. He had been willing to sacrifice his own designs to the will of God, and had thus shown his preference for God and his law. This sense seems to be the most simple of any, and it is surprising that it has not occurred to any expositors. So the same word is used in ver. 14. If this be the meaning, it expresses a true sentiment of piety in all ages. He who is truly religious is willing to sacrifice and abandon his own plans at the command of God. Job says that he was conscious of having done this, and he thus had a firm conviction that he was a pious man.

13. But he *is* in one mind. He is unchangeable. He has formed his plans, and no one can divert him from them. Of the *truth* of this sentiment there can be no dispute. The only difficulty in the case is to see why Job adverted to it here, and how it bears on the train of thought which he was pursuing. The idea seems to be, that God was now accomplishing his eternal purposes in respect to him; that he had formed a plan far back in eternal ages, and that that plan must be executed; that he was a Sovereign, and that however mysterious his plans might be, it was vain to contend with them, and that man ought to submit to their execution with patience and resignation. Job expected yet that God

14 For he performeth *the thing that is appointed* <sup>s</sup> for me: and many such *things* are with him.

g 1 Th. 3. 3.

would come forth and vindicate him; but at present all that he could do was to submit. He did not pretend to understand the reason of the divine dispensations; he felt that he had no power to resist God. The language here is that of a man who is perplexed in regard to the divine dealings, but who feels that they are all in accordance with the unchangeable purpose of God. ¶ And what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. He does what he pleases. None can resist or control him. It is vain, therefore, to contend against him. From this passage we see that the doctrine of divine sovereignty was understood at a very early age of the world, and entered undoubtedly into the religion of the patriarchs. It was then seen and felt that God was absolute: that he was not dependent on his creatures; that he acted according to a plan; that he was inflexible in regard to that plan, and that it was in vain to attempt to resist its execution. It is, when properly understood, a matter of unspeakable consolation that God has a plan—for who could honor a God who had no plan, but who did everything by hap-hazard? It is matter of rejoicing that he has *one* great purpose which extends through all ages, and which embraces all things—for then everything falls into its proper place, and has its appropriate bearing on other events. It is a matter of joy that God does execute all his purposes; for as they are all good and wise, it is *desirable* that they should be executed. It would be a calamity if a good plan were *not* executed. Why then should men murmur at the purposes or the decrees of God?

14. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me. "I am now meeting only what has been determined by his eternal plan. I know not what is the reason why it was appointed; but I see that God had resolved to do it, and that it is vain to resist him." So when we suffer, we may say the same thing. It

15 Therefore am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I

am afraid <sup>h</sup> of him.

A Ps. 119. 120.

is not by chance or hap-hazard that we are afflicted; it is because *God* has "appointed" that it should be so. It is not by passion or caprice on his part; not by sudden anger or wrath; but it is because he had determined to do it as a part of his eternal plan. It is much, when we are afflicted, to be able to make this reflection. I had rather be afflicted, feeling that it is the *appointment of God*, than feeling that it is *by chance or hap-hazard*. I had rather think that it is a part of a plan calmly and deliberately formed by God, than that it is the result of some unexpected and uncontrollable cause. In the one case, I see that mind and thought and plan have been employed, and I infer that there is a *reason* for it, though I cannot see it; in the other, I can see no proof of reason or of wisdom, and my mind finds no rest. The doctrine of divine purpose or decrees, therefore, is eminently adapted to give consolation to a sufferer. I had infinitely rather be under the operation of a plan or decree where there *may* be a reason for all that is done, though I cannot see it, than to feel that I am subject to the tossings of blind chance, where there can possibly be *no* reason. ¶ *And many such things are with him.* The purpose does not pertain to me alone. It is a part of a great plan which extends to others—to all things. He is executing his plans around me, and I should not complain that in the development of his vast purposes I am included, and that I suffer. The idea seems to be this, that Job found consolation in the belief that he was not alone in these circumstances; that he had not been marked out and selected as a special object of divine displeasure. Others had suffered in like manner. There were *many* cases just like his own, and why should he complain? If I felt that there was special displeasure against *me*, that no others were treated in the same way, it would make afflictions much more difficult to bear. But when I feel that there is *an* eternal plan which embraces all, and

that I only come in for my share, in common with others, of the calamities which are judged necessary for the world, I can bear them with much more ease and patience.

15. *Therefore am I troubled at his presence.* The doctrine of divine purposes and decrees is *fitted to impress the mind with awe*. So vast are the plans of God; so uncertain to us is it what will be developed next; so impossible is it to resist God when he comes forth to execute his plans, that they fill the mind with reverence and fear. And this is one of the objects for which the doctrine is revealed. It is designed to rebuke the soul that is filled with flippancy and self-conceit; to impress the heart with adoring views of God, and to secure a proper reverence for his government. Not knowing what may be the next development of his plan, the mind should be in a state of holy fear—yet ready to submit and how in whatever aspect his purposes may be made known. A Being, who has an eternal plan, and who is able to accomplish all that he purposes, and who makes known none of his dealings beforehand, should be an object of veneration and fear. It will not be the same *kind of dreadful fear* which we would have of one who had almighty power, but who had *no plan* of any kind, but profound veneration for one who is infinitely wise as well as almighty. The fear of an Almighty Being, who has an eternal plan, which we cannot doubt is wise, though it is inscrutable to us, is a fear mingled with confidence; it is awe leading to the profoundest veneration. His eternal counsels may take away *our* comforts, but they are right; his coming forth may fill us with awe, but we shall venerate and love him. ¶ *When I consider.* When I endeavor to understand his dealings; or when I think closely on them. ¶ *I am afraid of him.* This would be the effect on any mind. A man that will sit down alone and *think* of God, and on his vast plans, will

16 For God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me:

17 Because I was not cut off

see that there is abundant occasion to be in awe before him.

16. *For God maketh my heart soft.* That is, *faint*. He takes away my strength. Comp. Notes on Isa. vii. 4. This effect was produced on Job by the contemplation of the eternal plan and the power of God.

17. *Because I was not cut off before the darkness.* Before these calamities came upon me. Because I was not taken away in the midst of prosperity, and while I was enjoying his smiles and the proofs of his love. His trouble is, that he was spared to pass through these trials, and to be treated as if he were one of the worst of men. This is what now perplexes him, and what he cannot understand. He does not know

before the darkness, *neither* hath he covered the darkness from my face.

why God had reserved him to treat him as if he were the chief of sinners. ¶ *Neither hath he covered the darkness from my face.* The word "neither" is supplied here by our translators, but not improperly. The difficulty with Job was, that God had not *hidden* this darkness and calamity so that he had not seen it. He could not understand why, since he was his friend, God had not taken him away, so that all should have seen even in his death that he was the friend of God. This feeling is not, perhaps, very uncommon among those who are called to pass through trials. They do not understand why they were *reserved* to these sufferings, and why God did not take them away before the billows of calamity rolled over them.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

WHY, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty,

do they that know him not see his days?

1. *Why, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty.* Dr. Good renders this,

"Wherefore are not doomsdays kept by the Almighty,  
So that his offenders may eye his periods?"

Dr. Noyes,

"Why are not times of punishment reserved by the Almighty,  
And why do not they, who regard him, see his judgments?"

Jerome, "Times are not hidden from the Almighty; but they who know him are ignorant of his days." The LXX, "But why have set times — *ᾠραι* — escaped the notice — *ἐλαθον* — of the Almighty, and the wicked transgressed all bounds?" The word *times*, here translated *times*, is rendered by the Chaldee (*שִׁיטָּה*), *set times*, times ap-

pointed for an assembly or a trial, beforehand designated for any purpose. The Hebrew word properly means, set time, fit and proper times; and in the plural, as here used, means *seasons*, Est. i. 13; 1 Chron. xii. 32; and then vicissitudes of things, fortunes, destinies. Ps. xxxi. 15; 1 Chron. xxix. 30. Here it means, probably, the vicissitudes of things or what actually occurs. All changes are known to God. He sees good and bad times; he sees the changes that take place among men. And since he sees all this, Job asks, with concern, Why is it that God does not come forth to deal with men according to their true character? That this was the fact, he proceeds to show farther in illustration of the position which he had maintained in ch. xxi., by specifying a number of

2 *Some remove the land marks; they violently take away flocks, and feed <sup>1</sup> thereof.*

<sup>1</sup> or, them.

additional cases where the wicked undeniably prospered. It was this which perplexed him so much, for he did not doubt that their conduct was clearly known to God. If their conduct had been unknown to God, it would not have been a matter of surprise that they should go unpunished. But since all their ways were clearly seen by him, it might well excite inquiry why they were permitted thus to prosper. *He* believed that they were reserved to a future day of wrath, ch. xxi. 30; ch. xxiv. 23, 24. They would be punished in due time, but it was not a fact, as his friends alleged, that they were punished in this life according to their deeds. ¶ *Do they that know him.* His true friends; the pious. ¶ *Not see his days?* The days of his wrath, or the day when he punishes the wicked. Why are they not permitted to see him come forth to take vengeance on his foes? The phrase "*his days*" means the days when God would come forth to punish his enemies. They are called "*his days*" because at that time God would be the prominent object that would excite attention. They would be days when he would manifest himself in a manner so remarkable as to characterize the period. Thus the day of judgment is called the day "of the Son of Man," or "*his day*," (Luke xvii. 24.) because at that time the Lord Jesus will be the prominent and glorious object that shall give character to the day. The question here seems to have been asked by Job mainly to call attention to the fact which he proceeds to illustrate. The fact was undeniable; Job did not maintain, as Eliphaz had charged on him, (ch. xxii. 12—14,) that the reason why God did not punish them was, that he could not see their deeds. He admitted most fully that God did see them, and understood all that they did. In this they were agreed. Since this was so, the question was, why the wicked were spared, and lived in prosperity. The

3 *They drive away the ass of the fatherless, they take <sup>a</sup> the widow's ox for a pledge.*

<sup>a</sup> De. 24. 6, 17.

fact that it was so, Job affirms. The reason why it was so, was the subject of inquiry now. This was perplexing, and Job could solve it only by referring to what was to come hereafter.

2. *Some remove the land marks.* Landmarks are pillars or stones set up to mark the boundaries of a farm. To remove them, by carrying them on to the land of another, was an act of dishonesty and robbery—since it was only by marks that the extent of a man's property could be known. Fences were uncommon; the art of surveying was not well understood, and deeds describing land were probably unknown also, and their whole dependence, therefore, was on the stones that were erected to make the boundaries of a lot or farm. As it was not difficult to remove them, it became a matter of special importance to guard against it, and to make it a crime of magnitude. Accordingly, it was forbidden in the strictest manner in the law of Moses. "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour's land-mark." Deut. xxvii. 17; Comp. Deut. xix. 14; Prov. xxii. 28, xxiii. 10. ¶ *And feed thereof.* Marg., "or, them." The margin is correct. The meaning is, that they drive off the flocks of others, and *pasture* them; that is, they are at no pains to conceal what they do, but mingle them with their own herds, and feed them as if they were their own. If they drove them away to kill, and removed them wholly from view, it would be less shameful than to keep and claim them as their own, and to make the robbery so public.

3. *They drive away the ass of the fatherless.* Of the orphan, who cannot protect himself, and whose only property may consist in this useful animal. Injury done to an orphan is always regarded as a crime of peculiar magnitude, for they are unable to protect themselves. See Notes, ch. xxii. 9. ¶ *They take the widow's ox for a pledge.* See Notes, ch. xxii. 6. The widow was

4 They turn the needy out of the way : the poor of the earth hide themselves together.

5 Behold, as wild asses in the desert, go they forth to their work; rising betimes for a prey :

dependent on her ox to till the ground, and hence the crime of taking it away in pledge for the payment of a debt.

4. *They turn the needy out of the way.* They crowd the poor out of the path, and thus oppress and injure them. They do not allow them the advantages of the highway. ¶ *The poor of the earth hide themselves together.* For fear of the rich and mighty man. Driven from the society of the rich, without their patronage and friendship, they are obliged to associate together, and find in the wicked man neither protector nor friend. And yet the proud oppressor is not punished.

5. *Behold, as wild asses in the desert.* In regard to the wild ass, see Notes on ch. vi. 5. Schultens, Good, Noyes, and Wemyss understand this, not as referring to the haughty tyrants themselves, but to the oppressed and needy wretches whom they had driven from society, and compelled to seek a precarious subsistence, like the wild ass in the desert. They suppose that the meaning is, that these outcasts go to their daily toil seeking roots and vegetables in the desert for a subsistence, like wild animals. But it seems to me that the reference is rather to another class of wicked men. to the wandering tribes that live by plunder—who roam through the deserts, and live an unrestrained and a lawless life, like wild animals. The wild ass is distinguished for its fleetness, and the comparison here turns principally on this fact. These marauders move rapidly from place to place, make their assault suddenly and unexpectedly, and having plundered the traveller, or the caravan, as suddenly disappear. They have no home, cultivate no land, and keep no flocks. The only objection to this interpretation is, that the wild ass is not a beast of prey. But, in reply to this, it may be said, that the comparison does not

the wilderness *yieldeth* food for them *and for their children.*

6 They reap *every one* his<sup>1</sup> corn in the field, and<sup>2</sup> they gather the vintage of the wicked.

<sup>1</sup> mingled corn, or, dredge.

<sup>2</sup> the wicked gather the vintage.

depend on that, but on the fact that they resemble those animals in their lawless habits of life. See Notes on ch. xi. 12, xxxix. 5. ¶ *Go they forth to their work.* To their employment—to wit, plunder. ¶ *Rising betimes.* Rising early. It is a custom of the Orientals everywhere to rise by break of day. In journeys, they usually rise long before day, and travel much in the night, and during the heat of the day they rest. As caravans often travel early, plunderers would rise early, also, to meet them. ¶ *For a prey.* For plunder—the business of their lives. ¶ *The wilderness.* The desert, for so the word wilderness is used in the Scriptures. See Notes on Isa. xxxv. 1; Matth. iii. 1. ¶ *Yieldeth food.* To wit, by plunder. They obtain subsistence for themselves and their families by plundering the caravans of the desert. The idea of Job is, that they are seen by God, and yet that they are suffered to roam at large.

6. *They reap every one his corn.* Marg., *mingled corn, or dredge.* The word here used (מִגְדָּל) denotes, properly, *meslin*, mixed provender, made up of various kinds of grain, as of barley, vetches, &c., prepared for cattle. See Notes on Isa. xxx. 24. ¶ *In the field.* They break in upon the fields of others, and rob them of their grain, instead of cultivating the earth themselves. So it is rendered by Jerome—*Agrum non suum demetunt; et vineam ejus, quem vi oppresserint, vindemiant.* The LXX render it, “A field, not their own, they reap down before the time—πρὸ ὥρας.” ¶ *They gather the vintage of the wicked.* Marg., *the wicked gather the vintage.* Rather, they gather the vintage of the oppressor. It is not the vintage of honest industry; not a harvest which is the result of their own labor, but of plunder. They live by depredations on



7 They cause the naked to lodge without clothing, that *they* have no covering in the cold.

8 They are wet with the showers of the mountains, and embrace <sup>b</sup> the rock for want of a shelter.

9 They pluck the fatherless

<sup>b</sup> La. 4. 5.

others. This is descriptive of those who support themselves by robbery.

7. *They cause the naked to lodge without clothing.* They strip others of their clothing, and leave them destitute. ¶ *That they have no covering in the cold.* All travellers tell us, that though the day is intensely hot in the deserts of Arabia, yet the nights are often intensely cold. Hence, the sufferings of those who are plundered, and who have nothing to defend themselves from the cold air of the night.

8. *They are wet with the showers of the mountains.* That is, the poor persons, or the travellers, whom they have robbed. Hills collect the clouds, and showers seem to pour down from the mountains. These showers often collect and pour down so suddenly that there is scarcely time to seek a shelter, ¶ *And embrace the rock for want of a shelter.* Take refuge beneath a projecting rock. The robbers drive them away from their homes, or plunder them of their tents, and leave them to find a shelter from the storm, or at night, beneath a rock. This agrees exactly with what Niebuhr says of the wandering Arabs near Mount Sinai: "Those who cannot afford a tent, spread out a cloth upon four or six stakes; and others spread their cloth near a tree, or endeavour to shelter themselves from the heat and the rain in the cavities of the rocks." Reisebeschreib. i. Th. s. 233.

9. *They pluck the fatherless from the breast.* That is, they steal away unprotected children, and sell them, or make slaves of them for their own use. If this is the correct interpretation, then there existed at that time, what has existed since, so much to the disgrace of mankind, the custom of kidnapping children, and bearing them away to be

from the breast, and take a pledge of the poor.

10 They cause *him* to go naked without clothing, and they take away the sheaf *from* the hungry;

11 *Which* make oil within their walls, and tread *their* wine-presses, and suffer thirst.

sold as slaves. Slavery existed in early ages; and it must have been in some such way that slaves were procured. The wonder of Job is, that such men were permitted to live—that God did not come forth and punish them. The fact still exists, and the ground of wonder is not diminished. Africa bleeds under wrongs of this kind; and the vengeance of heaven seems to sleep, though the child is torn away from its mother, and conveyed, amid many horrors, to a distant land, to wear out life in hopeless servitude. ¶ *And take a pledge of the poor.* Take that, therefore, which is necessary for the comfort of the poor, and retain it, so that they cannot enjoy its use. See Notes on ch. xxii. 6.

10. *And they take away the sheaf from the hungry.* The meaning of this is, that the hungry are compelled to bear the sheaf for the rich without being allowed to satisfy their hunger from it. Moses commanded that even the ox should not be muzzled that trod out the corn (Deut. xxv. 4); but here was more aggravated cruelty than that would be, in compelling men to bear the sheaf of the harvest without allowing them even to satisfy their hunger. This is an instance of the cruelty which Job says was actually practised on the earth, and yet God did not interpose to punish it.

11. *Which make oil within their walls.* Or rather, they compel them to express oil within their walls. The word לָאֵשׁ, rendered "make oil," is from לָאֵשׁ, to shine, to give light; and hence the derivatives of the word are used to denote light, and then oil, and thence the word comes to denote to press out oil for the purpose of light. Oil was

12 Men groan from out of the city, and the soul of the wounded

crieth out: yet God layeth not folly to them.

obtained for this purpose from olives by pressing them, and the idea here is, that the poor were compelled to engage in this service for others without compensation. The expression, "within their walls," means probably within the walls of the rich; that is, within the inclosures where such presses were erected. They were taken away from their homes; compelled to toil for others; and confined for this purpose within inclosures erected for the purpose of expressing oil. Some have proposed to read this passage, "Between their walls they make them toil at noonday;" as if it referred to the cruelty of causing them to labor in the sweltering heat of the sun. But the former interpretation is the most common, and best agrees with the usual meaning of the word, and with the connexion. ¶ And tread their wine-presses, and suffer thirst. They compel them to tread out their grapes without allowing them to slake their thirst from the wine. Such a treatment would, of course, be cruel oppression. A similar description is given by Addison in his letter from Italy:

“Il povero Abitante mira indarno  
Il roseggiante Arancio e'l pingue grano,  
Crescer dolente ei mira ed oli, e vini,  
E de mirti odorar l'ombra si sdegna.  
In mezzo alla Bontà della Natura  
Maledetto languisce, e deatro a cariche  
Di vino vigne muore per la sete.”

“The poor inhabitant beholds in vain  
The reddening orange and the swelling  
grain;  
Joyless he sees the growing oils and wines,  
And in the myrtle's fragrant shade repines;  
Starves, in the midst of nature's bounty  
curst,  
And in the loaden vineyard dies for thirst.”

Addison's Works, vol. i. pp. 51—53.  
Ed. Lond. 1721.

12. Men groan from out of the city. The evident meaning of this is, that the sorrows caused by oppression were not confined to the deserts and to solitary places; were not seen only where the wandering freebooter seized upon the traveller, or in the comparatively unfrequented places in the country where the poor were compelled to labor in the wine-presses and the olive-presses

of others, but that they extended to cities also. In what way this oppression in cities was practised, Job does not specify. It might be by the sudden descent upon an unsuspecting city, of hordes of freebooters, who robbed and murdered the inhabitants, and then fled, or it might be by internal oppression, as of the rich over the poor, or of masters over their slaves. The idea which Job seems to wish to convey is, that oppression abounded. The earth was full of violence. It was in every place, in the city and the country, and yet God did not, in fact, come forth to meet and punish the oppressor as he deserved. There would be instances of oppression and cruelty enough occurring in all cities to justify all that Job here says, especially in ancient times, when cities were under the control of tyrants. The word which is translated men here is אֲדָמָה, which is not the usual term to denote men. This word is derived from אָדָם, to die; and hence there may be here the notion of mortals, or of the dying, who utter these groans. ¶ And the soul of the wounded crieth out. This expression appears as if Job referred to some acts of violence done by robbers, and perhaps the whole description is intended to apply to the sufferings caused by the sudden descent of a band of marauders upon the unsuspecting and slumbering inhabitants of a city. ¶ Yet God layeth not folly to them. The word rendered folly (רָעָה) means folly, and thence also wickedness. If this reading is to be retained, the passage means, that God does not lay to heart, that is, does not regard their folly or wickedness. He suffers it to pass without punishing it. Comp. Acts xvii. 30. But the same word, by a change of the points (רָעָה), means prayer; and many have supposed that it means, that God does not regard the prayer or cry of those who are thus oppressed. This, in itself, would make good sense, but the former rendering agrees better with the connexion. The object of Job is not to show that God

13 They are of those that rebel against the light; they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof.

14 The <sup>c</sup> murderer rising with the light killeth the poor and needy, and in the night is as a thief.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. 10. 8—11.

does not regard the cry of the afflicted, but that he does not interpose to punish those who are tyrants and oppressors.

13. *They are of those that rebel against the light.* That is, they hate the light. Comp. John iii. 20. It is unpleasant to them, and they perform their deeds in the night. Job here commences a reference to another class of wicked persons—those who perform their deeds in the darkness of the night; and he shows that the same thing is true of them as of those who commit crimes in open day, that God does not interpose directly to punish them. They are suffered to live in prosperity. This should be rendered, “Others hate the light;” or, “There are those also who are rebellious against the light.” There is great force in the declaration, that those who perform deeds of wickedness in the night are *rebels* against the light of day. ¶ *They know not the ways thereof.* They do not see it. They work in the night. ¶ *Nor abide in the paths thereof.* In the paths that the light makes. They seek out paths on which the light does not shine.

14. *The murderer.* One of the instances referred to in the previous verse of those who perform their deeds in darkness. ¶ *Rising with the light.* Heb., *וַיִּשָׁרָץ*. Vulg., *Manè primo—in the earliest twilight.* The meaning is, that he does it very early; by daybreak. It is not in open day, but at the earliest dawn. ¶ *Killeth the poor and needy.* Those who are so poor and needy that they are obliged to rise early and go forth to their toil. There is a double aggravation—the crime of murder itself, and the fact that it is committed on those who are under a necessity of going forth at that early hour to their labor.

15 The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, <sup>d</sup> saying, No eye shall see me: and <sup>e</sup> disguiseth his face.

16 In the dark they dig through houses, *which* they had marked for themselves in the daytime: they <sup>c</sup> know not the light.

<sup>d</sup> Pr. 7. 8, 9.

<sup>e</sup> <sup>1</sup> setteth his face in secret.  
<sup>c</sup> Jno. 3. 20.

¶ *And in the night is as a thief.* The same man. Theft is usually committed under cover of the night. The idea of Job is, that though these crimes cannot escape the notice of God, yet that he does not interpose to punish those who committed them. A striking incidental illustration of the fact stated here occurred in the journey of Messrs. Robinson and Smith, on their way from Akabah to Jerusalem. After retiring to rest one night, they were aroused by a sudden noise; and they apprehended an attack by robbers. “Our Arabs,” says Dr. R., “were evidently alarmed. They said, if thieves, *they would steal upon us at midnight; if robbers, they would come down upon us towards morning.*” Bibl. Research, i. 270. It would seem, therefore, that there was some settled time or order in which they are accustomed to commit their various depredations.

15. *The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight.* Comp. the description in Prov. vii. 8, 9, “He went the way to her house; in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night.” ¶ *And disguiseth his face.* Marg., *setteth his face in secret.* The meaning is, that he put a mask on his face, lest he should be recognised. So Juvenal, Sat. viii. 144, as quoted by Noyes:

“— si nocturnus adulter  
Tempora Santonico velas adoperta cucullo.”

These deeds of wickedness were then performed in the night, as they are still; and yet, though the eye of God beheld them, he did not punish them. The meaning of Job is, that men were allowed to commit the blackest crimes, but that God did not come forth to cut them off.

16. *In the dark they dig through houses.* This refers, probably, to another class

of wicked persons. The adulterer steals forth in the night, but it is not his way to "dig" into houses. But the persons here referred to are robbers, who conceal themselves by day, and who at night secretly enter houses for plunder. The phrase "dig through" probably has reference to the fact that houses were made of clay, or of bricks dried in the sun—a species of mud cottages, and those walls, therefore, could be easily penetrated. In the East, nearly all the houses are made of unburnt

brick, and there is little difficulty in making a hole in the wall large enough to admit the human body. Comp. Ezek. xii. 7. In Bengal, says Mr. Ward, it is common for thieves to dig through the walls of houses made of mud, or under the house-floors, which are made merely of earth, and enter thus into the dwellings while the inmates are asleep. Rosenmüller's *Alte u. neue Morgenland in loc.* The following engraving will furnish a good illustration of such a house:



¶ Which they had marked for themselves in the daytime. According to this translation, the idea would be, that in the day-time they carefully observed

houses, and saw where an entrance might be effected. But this interpretation seems contrary to the general sense of the passage. It is said that they

17 For the morning is to them even as the shadow of death: if one know them, they are in the terrors<sup>f</sup> of the shadow of death.

*f* Ps. 73. 18, 19.

avoid the light, and that the night is the time for accomplishing their purposes. Probably, therefore, the meaning of this passage is, "in the day-time they shut themselves up." So it is rendered by Gesenius, Rosenmüller, Noyes, and others. The word here used, and rendered "marked" (סִמָּן), means to seal, to seal up; and hence the idea of shutting up, or making fast. See Notes on Job ix. 7; Isa. viii. 17. Hence it may mean to shut up close, as if one was locked in; and the idea here is, that in the day-time they shut themselves up close in their places of concealment, and went forth to their depredations in the night. ¶ *They know not the light.* They do not see the light. They do all their work in the dark.

17. *For the morning is to them even as the shadow of death.* They dread the light as one does usually the deepest darkness. The morning or light would reveal their deeds of wickedness, and they therefore avoid it. ¶ *As the shadow of death.* As the deepest darkness. See Notes on ch. iii. 5. ¶ *If one know them.* If they are recognised. Or, more probably, this means "they," i. e., each one of them, "are familiar with the terrors of the shadow of death," or with the deepest darkness. By this rendering, the common signification of the word (יָדָע) will be retained, and the translation will accord with the general sense of the passage. The meaning is, that they are familiar with the blackest night. They do not dread it. They dread only the light of day. To others the darkness is terrible; to them it is familiar. The word rendered "shadow of death" in the latter part of this verse is the same as in the former. It may mean in both places the gloomy night that resembles the shadow of death. Such a night is "terrible" to most men; to them it is familiar, and they feel secure only when its deep shades are round about them.

18 He is swift as the waters; their portion is cursed in the earth: he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards.

18. *He is swift as the waters.* Noyes renders this, "They are as swift as the skiff upon the waters." Dr. Good, "Miserable is this man upon the waters." Wemyss, "Such should be as foam upon the waters." Le Clerc says that there is scarcely any passage of the Scriptures more obscure than this, and the variety of rendering adopted will show at once the perplexity of expositors. Rosenmüller supposes that the particle of comparison (כִּי) is to be understood, and that the meaning is, "he is as a light thing upon the waters;" and this probably expresses the true sense. It is a comparison of the thief with a light boat, or any other light thing that moves gently on the face of the water, and that glides along without noise. So gently and noiselessly does the thief glide along in the dark. He is rapid in his motion, but he is still. It is not uncommon to describe one who is about to commit crime in the night as moving noiselessly along, and as taking every precaution that the utmost silence should be preserved. So Macbeth, when about to commit murder, soliloquizes:—

"Now o'er the one half world

Nature seems dead,——

And wither'd murder,

Alarm'd by his sentinel, the wolf,  
Who's howl'd his watch, thus with his stealthy

pace,  
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his

design  
Moves like a ghost.

Thou sure and firm-set earth,

Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for  
fear

The very stones prate of my whereabouts."

I do not know, however, that this comparison of a thief with a light object on the waters is to be found anywhere else, but it is one of great beauty. The word rendered "swift" (רָפֵד), may denote either that which is *swift*, or that which is *light*. In Isa. xxx. 16, it is applied to a fleet horse. Here it may be rendered, "He is as a light thing

19 Drought and heat <sup>1</sup> consume the snow waters: so *doth* the grave *those which* have sinned.

20 The womb shall forget him;

<sup>1</sup> *violently take.*

upon the face of the waters." ¶ *Their portion is cursed in the earth.* That is, their manner of life, their way of obtaining a livelihood, is deserving of execration. The result of humble toil and honest labor may be said to be blessed; but not the property which they acquire. Rosenmüller and Noyes, however, suppose that the word "portion" here refers to their habitation, and that the idea is, they have their dwelling in wild and uncultivated places; they live in places that are cursed by sterility and barrenness. The Hebrew will bear either construction. The word *lot*, as it is commonly understood by us, may perhaps embrace both ideas. "Theirs is a cursed lot on earth." ¶ *He beholdeth not the way of the vineyards.* That is, they do not spend their lives in cultivating them, nor do they derive a subsistence from them. They live by plunder, and their abodes are in wild retreats, far away from quiet and civilized society. The object seems to be to describe marauders, who make a sudden descent at night on the possessions of others, and who have their dwellings far away from fields that are covered with the fruits of cultivation.

19. *Drought and heat consume the snow waters.* Marg., *violently take.* See Notes on ch. vi. 17. The word rendered "consume," and in the margin "violently take" (שָׁדָה), means, properly, to strip off, as skin from the flesh; and then to pluck or tear away by force; to strip, to spoil, to rob. The meaning here is, that the heat seems to seize and carry away the snow-waters—to bear them off, as a plunderer does spoil. There is much poetic beauty in this image. The "snow-waters" here mean the waters that are produced by the melting of the snow on the hills, and which swell the rivulets in the valleys below. Those waters, Job says,

the worm shall feed sweetly on him; he shall be no more remembered; and wickedness shall be broken as a tree.

g Pr. 10. 7. Is. 26. 14.

are borne along in rivulets over the burning sands, until the drought and heat absorb them all, and they vanish away. See the beautiful description of this which Job gives in ch. vi. 15—18. Those waters vanish away silently and gently. The stream becomes smaller and smaller as it winds along in the desert, until it all disappears. So Job says it is with these wicked men whom he is describing. Instead of being violently cut off; instead of being hurried out of life by some sudden and dreadful judgment, as his friends maintained, they were suffered to linger on calmly and peaceably—as the stream glides on gently in the desert—until they quietly disappear by death—as the waters sink gently in the sands or evaporate in the air. The whole description is that of a peaceful death as contradistinguished from one of violence. ¶ So *doth the grave those which have sinned.* There is a wonderful terseness and energy in the original words here, which is very feebly expressed by our translation. The Hebrew is (קבר חַיִּים) "the grave, they have sinned." The sense is correctly expressed in the common version. The meaning is, that they who have sinned die in the same quiet and gentle manner with which waters vanish in the desert. By those who have sinned, Job means those to whom he had just referred—robbers, adulterers, murderers, &c., and the sense of the whole is, that they died a calm and peaceful death. See Notes on ch. xxi. 13, where he advances the same sentiment as here.

20. *The womb shall forget him.* His mother who bare him shall forget him. The idea here seems to be, that he shall fade out of the memory, just as other persons do. He shall not be overtaken with any disgraceful punishment, thus giving occasion to remember him by a death of ignominy. At first

21 He evil entreateth the barren *that* beareth not: and doeth not good to the widow.

view it would seem to be a calamity to be soon forgotten by a mother; but if the above interpretation be correct, then it means that the condition of his death would be such that there would be no occasion for a mother to remember him with sorrow and shame, as she would one who was ignominiously executed for his crimes. This interpretation was proposed by Mercer, and has been adopted by Rosenmüller, Noyes, and others. It accords with the general scope of the passage, and is probably correct. Various other interpretations, however, have been proposed, which may be seen in Good, and in the Critici Sacri. ¶ *The worm shall feed sweetly on him.* As on others. He shall die and be buried in the usual manner. He shall lie quietly in the grave, and there return to his native dust. He shall not be suspended on a gibbet, or torn and devoured by wild beasts; but his death and burial shall be peaceful and calm. See Notes on ch. xxi. 26; xix. 26. ¶ *He shall be no more remembered.* As having been a man of eminent guilt, or as ignominiously punished. The meaning is, that there is nothing marked and distinguishing in his death. There is no peculiar manifestation of the divine displeasure. There is some truth in this, that the wicked cease to be remembered. Men hasten to forget them; and having done no good that makes them the objects of grateful remembrance, their memory fades away. This, so far from being a calamity and a curse, Job regards as a favor. It would be a calamity to be remembered as a bad man, and as having died an ignominious death. ¶ *And wickedness shall be broken as a tree.* Evil here or wickedness (רָעָה) means an evil or wicked man. The idea seems to be, that such a man would die as a tree that is stripped of its leaves and branches is broken down. He is not like a green tree that is violently torn up by the roots in a storm, or twisted off in a

22 He draweth also the mighty with his power: he riseth up, <sup>1</sup> and no man is sure of life.

<sup>1</sup> or, he trusteth not his own life.

tempest, but like a dry tree that begins to decay, and that falls down gently by its own weight. It lives to be old, and then quietly sinks on the ground and dies. So Job says it is with the wicked. They are not swept away by the divine judgments, as the trees of the forest are torn up by the roots or twisted off by the tornado.

21. *He evil entreateth the barren.* The woman who has no children to comfort or support her. He increases her calamity by acts of cruelty and oppression. To be without children, as is well known, was regarded, in the patriarchal ages, as a great calamity. ¶ *And doeth not good to the widow.* See Notes on ch. xxiv. 3. Notwithstanding all this, he is permitted to live in prosperity, and to die without any visible tokens of the divine displeasure.

22. *He draweth also the mighty with his power.* The word here rendered *draweth* (שָׁפַע), means to draw; and then, to lay hold of, to take, to take away, and, hence, to remove, to destroy. Ps. xxviii. 3; Ezek. xxii. 20. The idea here seems to be, that his acts of oppression and cruelty were not confined to the poor and the defenceless. Even the great and the mighty were also exposed, and he spared none. No one was safe, and no rights could be regarded as secure. The character here described is one that pertains to a tyrant, or a conqueror, and Job probably meant to describe some such mighty man, who was regardless alike of the rights of the high and the low. ¶ *He riseth up.* When he rises up; that is, when he enters on an enterprise, or goes forth to accomplish his wicked purposes. ¶ *And no man is sure of life.* From the dread of him even the great and mighty have no security. This language will well describe the character of an Oriental despot. Having absolute power, no man, not even the highest in rank, can feel that his life is safe if the monarch becomes in any

23 *Though it be given him to be in safety, whereon he resteth; yet his<sup>h</sup> eyes are upon their ways.*

24 *They are exalted for a little<sup>i</sup> while, but are<sup>1</sup> gone and*

h Ps. 11. 4. Pr. 15. 3. i Ps. 37. 35, 36. 1 not.

way offended. Yet Job says that even such a despot was permitted to live in prosperity, and to die without any remarkable proof of the divine displeasure.

23. *Though it be given him to be in safety.* That is, God gives him safety. The name *God* is often understood, or not expressed. The meaning is, that God gives this wicked man, or oppressor, safety. He is permitted to live a life of security and tranquillity. ¶ *Whereon he resteth.* Or, rather, "And he is sustained, or upheld"—(פָּרַץ). The meaning is, that he is sustained or upheld by God. ¶ *Yet his eyes are upon their ways.* "And the eyes of God are upon the ways of such men." That is, God guards and defends them. He seems to smile upon them, and to prosper all their enterprises.

24. *They are exalted for a little while.* This was the proposition which Job was maintaining. His friends affirmed that the wicked were punished for their sins in this life, and that great crimes would soon meet with great calamities. This Job denies, and says that *the fact* was, that they were "exalted." Yet he knew that it was to be but for a little time, and *he* believed that they would, at no distant period, receive the proper reward of their deeds. He maintains, however, that their death might be tranquil and easy, and that no extraordinary proof of the divine displeasure would be perceived in the manner of their departure. ¶ *But are gone and brought low.* Marg., not. Heb., וַיִּכָּשְׁלוּ—"and are not." Comp. Gen. xlii. 13. "The youngest is this day with our father, and one is not." Gen. xxxvii. 30. "The child is not, and I, whither shall I go?" That is, the child

brought low; they are taken<sup>2</sup> out of the way as all *other*, and cut off as the tops of the ears of corn.

25 *And if it be not so now, who will make me a liar, and make my speech nothing worth?*

2 closed up.

is dead. Comp. the expression *Troja fuit*. The meaning here is, that they soon disappear, or vanish. ¶ *They are taken out of the way as all other.* They die in the same manner as other men do, and without any extraordinary expressions of the divine displeasure in their death. This was directly contrary to what his friends had maintained. The Hebrew word here (קָצַר) means, *to gather, to collect*; and is often used in the sense of "gathering to one's fathers," to denote death. ¶ *And cut off as the tops of the ears of corn.* Of wheat, barley, or similar grain. *Corn*, in the sense in which the word is commonly used in this country, was not known in the time of Job. The allusion here is to the harvest. When the grain was ripe, it seems they were in the habit of cutting off the ears, and not of cutting it near the root, as we do. The body of the stalk was left, and, hence, there is so frequent allusion in the Scriptures to stubble that was burnt. So, in Egypt, the children of Israel were directed to obtain the stubble left in the fields, in making brick, instead of having straw furnished them. The meaning of Job here is, that they would not be taken away by a violent death, or before their time, but that they would be like grain standing in the field to the time of harvest, and then peacefully gathered. Comp. Ps. lxxiii. 4.

25. *And if it be not so now, who will make me a liar?* A challenge to any one to prove the contrary to what he had said. Job had now attacked their main position, and had appealed to facts in defence of what he held. He maintained that, as a matter of fact, the wicked were prospered, that they often lived to old age, and that they then died a peaceful death, without any direct de-



monstration of the divine displeasure. He boldly appeals, now, to any one to deny this, or to prove the contrary. The appeal was decisive. The fact was undeniable, and the controversy was closed. Bildad (ch. xxv.) attempts a brief reply, but he does not touch the question about *the facts* to which Job had appealed, but utters a few vague and irrelevant proverbial maxims about the greatness of God, and is silent. His proverbs appear to be exhausted, and the theory which he and his friends had so carefully built up, and in which they had been so confident, was now overthrown. Perhaps this was one design of the Holy Spirit, in recording the argument thus far conducted, to show that the theory of the divine administration, which had been built up with so much care, and which was sustained by ~~so~~ many proverbial maxims, was false.

The overthrow of this theory was of sufficient importance to justify this protracted argument, for (1.) it was and is of the highest importance that correct views should prevail of the nature of the divine administration; and (2.) it is of especial importance in comforting the afflicted people of God. Job had experienced great aggravation, in his sufferings, from the position which his friends had maintained, and from the arguments which they had been able to adduce, to prove that his sufferings were proof that he was a hypocrite. But it is worth all which it has cost; all the experience of the afflicted friends of God, and all the pains taken to reveal it, to show that affliction is no certain proof of the divine displeasure, and that important ends may be accomplished by means of trial.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

THIS short reply of Bildad closes what the three friends of Job had to say, for Zophar does not attempt to answer. Bildad does not attempt to meet the appeals which Job had made to facts, or reply to his arguments. He does not even approach Job as he and his friends had done before, or even express his conviction that he was a wicked man. The speech is evidently that of one who felt that he must say *something*, but who did not know how to meet the course of argument which Job had pursued. He asserts, in a lofty strain, the majesty, dominion, and infinite perfection of the Deity, and then repeats the proposition, that in the sight of such a God the whole universe must be regarded as impure. It would seem to be implied that he supposed that Job's arguments went on the supposition that man was pure, and that all that was necessary to be said, was to re-affirm the impossibility that any should be holy in the sight of God. Many a man, when perplexed with some view of truth which wholly confounds all his reasoning and sets aside his maxims, but who lacks the ingenuousness to admit the force of the argument adduced, meets a case just as Bildad did. Unconvinced, he adheres to his own opinion; unable to meet the argument, he does not attempt to reply to it, yet feels that he must say *something* to show that he is not silenced. The feebleness of this reply, however, only encourages Job to utter the triumphant sentiments expressed in the following chapters.

**T**HEN answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said, with him, he maketh peace in his high places.

2 Dominion <sup>a</sup> and fear *are*

<sup>a</sup> Da. 4. 3, 34. Jude 25.

2. *Dominion and fear are with him.* That is, God has a right to rule, and he ought to be regarded with reverence. The object of Bildad is to show that He

is so great and glorious that it is impossible that man should be regarded as pure in his sight. He begins, therefore, by saying that he is Sovereign; that

3 Is there any number of his armies? and upon whom <sup>b</sup> doth not his light arise?

4 How then can man be justified <sup>c</sup> with God? or how can he

<sup>c</sup> c. 4. 17, &c. 15. 14, &c. Ps. 143, 2, &c. Ro. 5. 1, 21. <sup>b</sup> Mat. 5. 45.

he is clothed with majesty; and that he is worthy of profound veneration. ¶ *He maketh peace in his high places.* "High places" here refer to the heavenly worlds. The idea is, that he preserves peace and concord among the hosts of heaven. Numerous and mighty as are the armies of the skies, yet he keeps them in order and in awe. The object is to present an image of the majesty and power of that Being who thus controls a vast number of minds. The phrase does not necessarily imply that there had been variance or strife, and that then God had made peace, but that he preserved or kept them in peace.

3. *Is there any number of his armies?* The armies of heaven; or the hosts of angelic beings, which are often represented as arranged or marshalled into armies. See Notes on Isa. i. 9. The word which is here used is not the common one which is rendered "hosts," (צָבָא), but כְּבֹד, which means, properly, a troop, band, or army. It may here mean either the constellations, often represented as the army, which God marshals and commands, or it may mean the angels. ¶ *And upon whom doth not his light arise?* This is designed evidently to show the majesty and glory of God. It refers probably to the light of the sun, as the light which he creates and commands. The idea is, that it pervades all things; that, as controlled by him, it penetrates all places, and flows over all worlds. The image is a striking and sublime one, and nothing is better fitted to show the majesty and glory of God.

4. *How then can man be justified with God?* See ch. iv. 17, 18, xv. 15, 16. Instead of meeting the facts to which Job had appealed, all that Bildad could now do was to repeat what had been said before. It shows that he felt himself

be clean <sup>d</sup> *that is* born of a woman?

5 Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight;

<sup>d</sup> Zec. 13. 1. 1 Co. 6. 11. 1 Jno. 1. 9. Rev. 1. 5.

unable to dispose of the argument, and yet that he was not willing to confess that he was vanquished. ¶ *Or how can he be clean.* This sentiment had been expressed by Job himself, ch. xiv. 4. Perhaps Bildad meant now to adopt it as undoubted truth, and to throw it back upon Job as worthy of his special attention. It has no bearing on the arguments which Job had advanced, and is utterly irrelevant except as Bildad supposed that the course of argument maintained by Job implied that he supposed himself to be pure.

5. *Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not.* Or, behold even the moon shineth not. That is, in comparison with God, it is dark and obscure. The idea is, that the most beautiful and glorious objects become dim and fade away when compared with him. So Jerome renders it, *Ecce luna etiam non splendet.* The word here rendered *shineth* (יָאִיר) frequently means to pitch or remove a tent, and is a form of the word מִדְבָּר, uniformly rendered *tent* or *tabernacle*. Some have supposed that the meaning here is, that even the moon and the stars of heaven—the bright canopy above—were not fit to furnish a *tent* or *dwelling* for God. But the parallelism seems to demand the usual interpretation, as meaning that the moon and stars faded away before God. The word יָאִיר derives this meaning, according to Gesenius, from its relation to the word הָלַל, to be clear or brilliant, from the mutual relation of the verbs שָׁם and הָלַל. The Arabic has the same meaning. ¶ *Yea, the stars are not pure in his sight.* That is, they are not bright in comparison with him. The design is to show the glory of the Most High, and that nothing could be compared with him. See Notes, ch. iv. 18.

6 How much less man, *that is* a worm? and the son of man, *which* is a worm?

6. *How much less man.* See ch. iv. 19. Man is here mentioned as a worm; in ch. iv. 19, he is said to dwell in a house of clay, and to be crushed before the moth. In both cases the design is to represent him as insignificant in comparison with God. ¶ *A worm?* תולדה. See ch. vii. 5. The word is commonly applied to such worms as are bred in putridity, and hence the comparison is the more forcible. ¶ *And the son of man.* Another mode of speaking of man. Any one of the children of man is the same. No one of them can be compared with God. Comp. Notes, Matt. i. 1. ¶ *Which is a worm?* תולדה. Comp. Notes, Isa. i. 18. This word frequently denotes the worm from which the scarlet or crimson color was obtained. It is, however, used to denote the worm that is bred on putrid substances, and is so used here. Comp. Ex. xvi. 20; Isa. xiv. 11, lxvi. 24. It is also applied to a worm that destroys plants. Jonah iv. 7; Deut. xxviii. 39. Here it means,

that man is poor, feeble, powerless. In comparison with God, he is a crawling worm. All that is said in this chapter is true and beautiful, but it has nothing to do with the subject in debate. Job had appealed to the course of events in proof of the truth of his position. The true way to meet that was either to deny that the facts existed as he alleged, or to show that they did not prove what he had adduced them to establish. But Bildad did neither; nor did he ingenuously confess that the argument was against him and his friends. At this stage of the controversy, since they had nothing to reply to what Job had alleged, it would have been honorable in them to have acknowledged that they were in error, and to have yielded the palm of victory to him. But it requires extraordinary candor and humility to do that; and rather than do it, most men would prefer to say *something*—though it have nothing to do with the case in hand.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

In this chapter Job commences a reply to all that had been said by his three friends, and concludes the controversy. At the close of this chapter, it would seem probable, that he paused for Zophar, whose turn came next to speak, but as he said nothing, he resumed his discourse, and continued it to the close of ch. xxxi.

This chapter consists of two parts. I. In the first part (vs. 1—4), Job begins the reply with sarcasms on his opponent as having offered nothing that in reality pertained to the dispute. He had made great pretensions, but he had not in any way met the difficulties of the case. He had not replied at all to his arguments, nor had he done anything to relieve his mind in its embarrassments. II. In the second part (vs. 5—14) Job himself enters into a statement of the power and majesty of the Almighty. He shows that he could speak in as lofty a style of the greatness of God as his friends could. His object in this seems to be, not merely a trial of skill in the description which was given of God, but to show them that the views which he cherished were not produced by any low and grovelling conceptions of God. He had the most exalted ideas of him. He accorded with all that they said. He could even go beyond them in his descriptions of the divine majesty and glory. His views about his own character, therefore, were not inconsistent with the most exalted conceptions of the Deity, nor did he regard the most elevated views of God as any proof that he himself was eminently guilty or hypocritical, as they seemed to suppose. Having thus shown that his views of God were quite as exalted as those of his friends, in the next chapter he returns to his argument, and defends the positions which he had before advanced.

**B**UT Job answered and said,  
 2 How <sup>a</sup> hast thou helped  
 him that is without power? how  
 savest thou the arm that hath no  
 strength?

3 How hast thou counselled  
 him that hath no wisdom? and

a Is. 40. 14.

2. *How hast thou helped him that is without power?* It has been doubted whether this refers to Job himself, the two friends of Bildad, or to the Deity. *Rosenmüller*. The connexion, however, seems to demand that it should be referred to Job himself. It is sarcastical. Bildad had come as a friend and comforter. He had, also, in common with Eliphaz and Zophar, taken upon himself the office of teacher and counsellor. He had regarded Job as manifesting great weakness in his views of God and of his government; as destitute of all strength to bear up aright under trials, and now all that he had done to aid one so weak was found in the impertinent and irrelevant generalities of his brief speech. Job is indignant that one with such pretensions should have said nothing more to the purpose. Herder, however, renders this as if it related wholly to God, and it cannot be denied that the Hebrew would bear this:

\* Whom helpest thou? Him who hath no strength?

Whom dost thou vindicate? Him whose arm hath no power?

To whom give counsel? One without wisdom?

Truly much wisdom hast thou taught him!"

¶ *How savest thou the arm that hath no strength?* That is, your remarks are not adapted to invigorate the feeble. He had come professedly to comfort and support his afflicted friend in his trials. Yet Job asks what there was in his observations that was fitted to produce this effect? Instead of declaiming on the majesty and greatness of God, he should have said something that was adapted to relieve an afflicted and a troubled soul.

3. *How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom?* As he had undertaken

*how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?*

4 To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit <sup>b</sup> came from thee?

5 Dead things are formed from under the waters, <sup>1</sup> and the inhabitants thereof.

b Ec. 12. 7.

<sup>1</sup> or, with.

to give counsel to another, and to suggest views that might be adapted to elevate his mind in his depression, and to console him in his sorrows, he had a right to expect more than he had found in his speech. ¶ *And how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?* The word rendered "the thing as it is" (תְּהִיבֵנּוּ) denotes, properly, a setting upright, uprightness—from תָּהִיב; then help, deliverance, Job vi. 13; purpose, undertaking, enterprise, Job v. 12; then counsel, wisdom, understanding, Job xi. 6, xii. 16. Here it is synonymous with *reason, wisdom, or truth*. The word rendered "plentifully" (רַבִּי) means, "for multitude," or abundantly, and the sense here is, that Bildad had made extraordinary pretensions to *wisdom*, and that this was the result. This short, irrelevant speech was all; a speech that communicated nothing new, and that met none of the real difficulties of the case.

4. *To whom hast thou uttered words?* Jeromerenders this, *Quem docere voluisti?*

"Whom do you wish to teach?" The sense is, "Do you attempt to teach me in such a manner, on such a subject?"

Do you take it that I am so ignorant of the perfections of God, that such remarks about him would convey any real instruction?" ¶ *And whose spirit came from thee?* This is, by whose spirit didst thou speak? What claims hast thou to inspiration, or to the uttering of sentiments beyond what man himself could originate? The meaning is, that there was nothing remarkable in what he had said that would show that he had been indebted for it either to God or to the wise and good on earth.

5. *Dead things.* Job here commences

his description of God, to show that his views of his majesty and glory were in no way inferior to those which had been expressed by Bildad, and that what Bildad had said conveyed to him no real information. In this description, he far surpasses Bildad in loftiness of conception and sublimity of description. Indeed, it may be doubted whether for grandeur this passage is surpassed by any description of the majesty of God in the Bible. The passage here has given rise to much discussion, and to a great variety of opinion. Our common translation is most feeble, and by no means conveys its true force. The *object* of the whole passage is to assert the universal dominion of God. Bildad had said (ch. xxv.) that the dominion of God extended to the heavens, and to the armies of the skies; that God surpassed in majesty the splendor of the heavenly bodies; and that compared with him man was a worm. Job commences his description by saying that the dominion of God extended even to the nether world; and that such were his majesty and power, that even the shades of the mighty dead trembled at his presence, and that hell was all naked before him. The word רִפְּהַיִּם—*Rephaim*—so feebly rendered "*dead things*," means, *the shades of the dead; the departed spirits that dwell in Sheol*. See the word explained at length in the Notes on Isa. xiv. 9. They are those who have left this world and who have gone down to dwell in the world beneath—the great and mighty conquerors and kings; the illustrious dead of past times, who have left the world and are congregated in the land of Shades. Jerome renders it, *gigantes*, and the LXX, γίγαντες—*giants*; from a common belief that those shades were larger than life. Thus Lucretius says:

"Quippe etenim jam tum divum mortalia sæcl.  
Egregias animo facies vigilante videbant;  
Et magis in somnis, mirando corporis aucti."  
Rer. Nat. v. 1168.

The word *shades* here will express the sense, meaning the departed spirits that are assembled in Sheol. The Chaldee renders it, גִּבּוֹרִים—*mighty ones, or giants*

the Syriac, in like manner, גִּבּוֹרִים

*giants*. ¶ *Are formed*. The Syriac renders this, אֲנִי אֲנִי—*are killed*.

Jerome, *gemunt*—groan; Sept., "Are giants born from beneath the water, and the neighboring places?" What idea the authors of that version attached to the passage it is difficult to say. The Hebrew word here used (אָנְחָה), from

אָנָה means to twist, to turn, to be in anguish—as in childbirth; and then it may mean to tremble, quake, be in terror; and the idea here seems to be, that the shades of the dead were in anguish, or trembled at the awful presence, and under the dominion of God. So Luther renders it—understanding it of giants—*Die Riesen ängsten sich unter den Wassern*. The sense would be well expressed, "The shades of the dead tremble, or are in anguish before him. They fear his power. They acknowledge his empire." ¶ *Under the waters*. The abode of departed spirits is always in this book placed beneath the ground. But why this abode is placed beneath the waters, is not apparent. It is usually under the ground, and the entrance to it is by the grave, or by some dark cavern. Comp. Virgil's *Æneid*, Lib. vi. A different interpretation has been proposed of this verse, which seems better to suit the connexion. It is to understand the phrase (אֲתַחַת) "*under*," as meaning simply *beneath*—"the shades beneath;" and to regard the word (מֵיִם) *waters* as connected with the following member:

"The shades beneath tremble;  
The waters and the inhabitants thereof."

Thus explained, the passage means that the whole universe is under the control of God, and trembles before him. Sheol and its Shades; the oceans and their inhabitants stand in awe before him. ¶ *And the inhabitants thereof*. Of the waters—the oceans. The idea is, that the vast inhabitants of the deep all recognise the power of God and tremble before him. This description accords with that given by the ancient poets of the power and majesty of the gods, and is not less sublime than any given by them.

6 Hell <sup>c</sup> is naked before him,  
and destruction hath no covering.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. 139. 8, 11. Pr. 15. 11. He. 4. 13.

6. *Hell*. Heb., *הַאֵדֹם*, *Sheol*; Gr., *ᾗδης*, *Hades*. The reference is to the abode of departed spirits—the nether world where the dead were congregated. See Notes on ch. x. 21, 22. It does not mean here, as the word *hell* does with us, a place of punishment, but the place where all the dead were supposed to be gathered together. ¶ *Is naked before him*. That is, he looks directly upon that world. It is hidden from us, but not from him. He sees all its inhabitants, knows all their employments, and sways a sceptre over them all. ¶ *And destruction*. Heb., *אַבְדּוֹן*, *Abaddon*. Comp. Rev. ix. 11, “And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.” The Hebrew word means *destruction*, and then *abyss*, or place of destruction, and is evidently given here to the place where departed spirits are supposed to reside. The word in this form occurs only here and in Prov. xv. 11; Ps. lxxxviii. 11; Job xxx. 12; in all which places it is rendered *destruction*. The idea here is, not that this is a place where souls are *destroyed*, but that it is a place similar to destruction—as if all life, comfort, light, and joy were extinguished. ¶ *Hath no covering*. There is nothing to conceal it from God. He looks down even on that dark nether world, and sees and knows all that is there. There is a passage somewhat similar to this in Homer, quoted by Longinus as one of unrivalled sublimity, but which by no means surpasses this. It occurs in the *Iliad*, xx. 61—66.

“Ἐδδισεν δ’ ὑπὲρθεον ἄναξ ἑνέρων Ἀΐδωνος  
κ.τ.λ.

\* Deep in the dismal regions of the dead,  
Th’ infernal monarch reared his horrid head,  
Leaped from his throne, lest Neptune’s arm  
should lay

His dark dominions open to the day,  
And pour in light on Pluto’s drear abodes,  
Abhorred by men, and dreadful e’en to gods.”  
POPE.

7 He stretcheth out <sup>d</sup> the north  
over the empty place, *and* hangeth  
the earth upon nothing.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. 104. 2.

7. *He stretcheth out the north*. This whole passage is particularly interesting as giving a view of the cosmology which prevailed in those early times. Indeed, as has been before remarked, this poem, apart from every other consideration, is of great value for disclosing to us the prevailing views on the subjects of astronomy, geography, and many of the arts, at a much earlier period than we have an account of them elsewhere. The word *north* here denotes the heavens as they appear to revolve around the pole, and which seem to be stretched out as a curtain. The heavens are often represented as a veil, an expanse, a curtain, or a tent. See Notes on Isa. xxxiv. 4; xl. 22. ¶ *Over the empty place*. *עֲלֵהוּ*, *Upon emptiness*, or *nothing*. That is, without anything to support it. The word here used (*הוּרָה*) is one of those employed Gen. i. 2, “And the earth was *without form* and *void*.” But it seems here to mean emptiness, nothing. The north is stretched out and sustained by the mere power of God. ¶ *And hangeth the earth upon nothing*. It has nothing to support it. So Milton:

“And earth self-balanced from her centre  
hung.”

There is no certain evidence here that Job was acquainted with the globular form of the earth, and with its diurnal and annual revolutions. But it is clear that he regarded it as not resting on any foundation or support; as lying on the vacant air, and kept there by the power of God. The Chaldee Paraphrast, in order to *explain* this, as that Paraphrase often does, adds the word *waters*. “He hangeth the earth *עָלֵי קִיָּא*, *upon the waters*, with no one to sustain it.” The sentiment here expressed by Job was probably the common opinion of his time. It occurs also in Lucretius:

“Terrasque ut in mediâ mundi regione quiescat,  
Evanescere paulatim et decrescere pondus  
Convenit; atque aliam naturam subter ha-  
bere,

8 He bindeth up <sup>c</sup> the waters

c Ge. 1. 6, 7. Pr. 30. 4.

Ex ineunte sevo conjunctam atque uniter  
 aptam  
 Partibus aëris mundi, quibus insita vivit.  
 Propterea non est oneri, neque deprimit  
 auras;  
 Et sua quoque homini nullo sunt pondere  
 membra,  
 Nec caput est oneri collo, nec denique totum  
 Corporis in pedibus pondus sentimus inesse." v. 535.

In this passage the sense is, that the earth is self-sustained; that it is no burden, or that no one part is burdensome to another—as in man the limbs are not burdensome, the head is not heavy, nor the whole frame burdensome to the feet. So, again, Lucretius says, ii. 601:—

"Hanc, veteres Grajūm docti cecinere poetæ—  
 Aëris in spatio magnam pendere—  
 Tellurem, neque posse in terrā sistere ter-  
 ram."

—"in ether poised she hangs,  
 Unpropt by earth beneath."

So Ovid says:—

"Ponderibus librata suis."

"Self-poised and self-balanced."

And again, Fastor. vi. 269:—

"Terra pilae similis, nullo fulmine nixa,  
 Ære subjecto tam grave pendet onus."

From passages like these occurring occasionally in the classic writers, it is evident that the true figure of the earth had early engaged the attention of men, and that occasionally the truth on this subject was before their minds, though it was neither wrought into a system nor sustained then by sufficient evidence to make it an article of established belief. The description here given is appropriate now; and had Job understood all that is now known of astronomy, his language would have been appropriate to express just conceptions of the greatness and majesty of God. It is proof of amazing power and greatness that he has thus "hung" the earth, the planets, the vast sun himself, upon nothing, and that by his own power he sustains and governs all.

8. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds. That is, he seems to do it, or to collect the waters in the clouds, as

in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them.

in bottles, or vessels. The clouds appear to hold the waters, as if bound up, until he is pleased to send them drop by drop upon the earth. ¶ And the cloud is not rent under them. The wonder which Job here expresses is, that so large a quantity of water as is poured down from the clouds, should be held suspended in the air without seeming to rend the cloud, and falling all at once. His image is that of a bottle, or vessel, filled with water, suspended in the air, and which is not rent. What were the views which he had of the clouds, of course it is impossible now to say. If he regarded them as they are, as vapors, or if he considered them to be a more solid substance, capable of holding water, there was equal ground for wonder. In the former case, his amazement would have arisen from the fact, that so light, fragile, and evanescent a substance as vapor should contain so large a quantity of water; in the latter case, his wonder would have been that such a substance should distil its contents drop by drop. There is equal reason for admiring the wisdom of God in the production of rain, now that the cause is understood. The clouds are collections of vapors. They contain moisture, or vapor, which ascends from the earth, and which is held in suspension when in small particles in the clouds, as when a room is swept, the small particles of dust will be seen to float in the room. When these small particles are attracted, and form masses as large as drops, the air will no longer sustain them, and they fall to the earth. Man never could have devised a way for causing rain; and the mode in which it is provided that large quantities of water shall be borne from one place to another in the air, and made to fall when it is needed, by which the vapors that ascend from the ocean shall not be suffered to fall again into the ocean, but shall be carried on to the land, is adapted to excite our admiration of the wisdom of God now, no less than it was in the time of Job.

9 He holdeth back the face of his throne, *and* spreadeth his cloud <sup>f</sup> upon it.

*f* Ps. 97. 2.

9. *He holdeth back the face of his throne.* That is, he does not exhibit it—he covers it with clouds. The idea seems to be, that God sometimes comes forth and manifests himself to mankind, but that he comes encompassed with clouds, so that his throne cannot be seen. So in Ps. xviii. 11, “He made darkness his secret place, his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.” God is often represented as encompassed with clouds, or as accompanied with tempests. ¶ *And spreadeth his cloud upon it.* That is, so that it cannot be seen. There is much poetic beauty in this image. It is, that the clouds are made to conceal the splendor of the throne of God from the sight of man, and that all their sublimity and grandeur, as they roll on one another, and all their beauty when painted with so many colors in the evening, are designed to hide that throne from mortal eyes. No one sees God; and though it is manifest that he is everywhere employed, and that he comes forth with amazing grandeur in the works of creation and providence, yet he is himself invisible.

10. *He hath compassed the waters with bounds.* The word rendered *compassed* (קָוָה, or חָוָה) means to describe a circle—to mark out with a compass; and the reference is to the form of the horizon, which appears as a circle, and which seems to be marked out with a compass. A similar idea Milton has beautifully expressed in his account of the creation.

“Then staid the fervid wheels, and in his hand

He took the golden compasses, prepared  
In God’s eternal store, to circumscribe  
This universe, and all created things:  
One foot he centered, and the other turned  
Round through the vast profundity obscure;  
And said, ‘Thus far extend thy bounds,  
This be thy just circumference, O world!’”

Par. Lost, B. vii.

In the passage before us, we have a statement of the ancient views of geo-

10 He hath compassed the waters with bounds, <sup>g</sup> until the <sup>1</sup> day and night come to an end.

*g* Pr. 8. 29. <sup>1</sup> end of light with darkness.

graphy, and of the outer limits of the world. The earth was regarded as a circular plane, surrounded by waters, and those waters encompassed with perpetual night. This region of night—this outer limit of the world, was regarded as at the outer verge of the celestial hemisphere, and on this the concave of heaven seemed to rest. See Virgil, *Geor. i.* 247—

“Illic, ut perhibent, aut intempesta silet nox.  
Semper, et obtenta densantur nocte tenebræ;  
Aut redit a nobis Aurora, diemque reducit.”

No maps are preserved constructed at so early an age as the time of Job; but maps have been constructed from the descriptions in Strabo, Herodotus, and others, which furnish illustrations of the prevailing views on the subject of geography in their times. The oldest geographical writer among the Romans is Mela, who lived in the reign of Claudius, and who died A. D. 54. In his work, *De Situ Orbis*, he gives a description of the world according to the prevailing views, and probably embodied the results of former investigations and discoveries. “We find him adopting, in its fullest extent, the belief of a circumambient ocean; and when he speaks of “the high earth in this middle part of it,” and describes the sea as going under and washing round it, we are led to believe, that he viewed the earth as a sort of cone, or as a high mountain raised by its elevation above the abyss of waters. Having made a vague division of the world into East, West, and North, he distributed it into five zones, two temperate, one torrid, and two frigid. Only the first two were habitable; and that on the South was inaccessible to man, on account of the torrid regions intervening. According to this system, however, there was on that side another earth, inhabited by people whom he calls *Antichthones*, from their opposite position with respect to that part which we inhabit. The form and boundaries of the known and habitable



earth are thus delineated:—The Mediterranean, with its branches of the Straits, the Euxine, and the Palus Mæotis; its great tributaries, the Nile and the Tanais—these combine, in his conception, to form the grand line by which the universe is divided. The Mediterranean itself separates Europe

from Africa; and these continents are bounded on the East, the former by the Tanais, the latter by the Nile; all beyond or to the East of these limits was Asia." The following engraving is probably a correct representation of his system, and gives the view of the world which prevailed in his time.



The ancient Arabs supposed the earth to be encompassed with an ocean. This ocean was called the "sea of darkness;" and the Northern sea was regarded as particularly pitchy and gloomy, and was called "the sea of pitchy darkness." Edrisi, a distinguished Arabic geographer of the middle ages, supposed that

the land floated on the sea, only a part of it appearing above the water, like an egg floating in the water. The following engraving, taken from an Arabian manuscript, will furnish an interesting view of the prevailing conceptions of the figure of the world in his time:



- |  |                            |                                    |                                   |
|--|----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 Mountains of the Moon and Sources of the Nile. | 5 Al-Wak Wak.              | 11 Al-Hejaz (Arabia Deserta.)      | 16 Al-Tajdeen.                    |
| 2 Berbara (kingdom of Adel.)                     | 6 Serendeeb (Ceylon.)      | 12 Al-Shujar (Seger.)              | 17 Al-Bejah.                      |
| 3 Al-Zung (Zanguebar.)                           | 7 Al-Comor (Madagascar.)   | 13 Al-Imama (Yamama.)              | 18 Al-Saneed (Upper Egypt, Said.) |
| 4 Sefala (Sofala.)                               | 8 A-Dasi.                  | 14 Al-Habesh (Ethiopia Abyssinia.) | 19 Al-ouhat-what (Oasis.)         |
|  | 9 Al-Yeman (Arabia Felix.) | 15 Al-Nuba (Nubia.)                | 20 Gowas.                         |
|  | 10 Tehama.                 |                                    | 21 Kanun.                         |

22 Belad Al-Iemlum.	34 Al-Sham (Syria.)	51 Al-Nufuz Izz.	69 Makeduneeah (Macedonia.)
23 Belad Mufrada.	35 Al-Irak (Persian empire.)	52 Kurjeea (Georgia.)	70 Baltic Sea.
24 Belad Nemaneh.		53 Keymak.	71 Jenubea (probably Sweden.)
25 Al-Mulita u Sinha-jeh.	36 Fars (Persia Proper.)	54 Kulhoea.	72 Germania (Germany.)
26 Curan (Karooan, Kurene.)	37 Kirman (Carmania.)	55 Izzea.	73 Denmark.
27 Negroland.	38 Alfazeh.	56 Azkush.	74 Afranseeah (France.)
28 Al-Sous Nera.	39 Mughan.	57 Turkish.	75 Felowiah (Norway.)
29 Al-Mughrub Al-Amkeen (Mogreb the West.)	40 Al-Sunda (Scindi.)	58 Iturab.	76 Burtæa or Burteneah (Britain.)
30 Afreekeea (Africa.)	41 Al-Hind (India.)	59 Bulghar (Bulgaria.)	77 Corsica, Sardinia, &c.
31 Belad El Gerid (Date Country.)	42 Al-Seen (China.)	60 Al-Mutenah.	78 Italy.
32 Seharee, Bereneek (or Desert of Berenike.)	43 Khorasan.	61 Yajooj (Gog.)	79 Ashkerineah (part of Spain, Q. Andalusia.)
33 Missur (Egypt.)	44 Al-Bcharus.	62 Majooj (Magog.)	
	45 Azerbijan (Media.)	63 Asiatic (Russia.)	
	46 Khuwarizm.	64 Bejeerut.	
	47 Al-Shash.	65 Al-Alman.	
	48 Khirkeez.	66 Al-Khuzzus Khosrs (Caspian Sea.)	
	49 Al-Sefur.	67 Turkea (Turkey.)	
	50 Al-Tibut (Tibet.)	68 Albeian (Albana.)	

A map of the world, constructed during the Crusades, and embodying the views of the world prevailing then, exhibits the world, also, as surrounded by a dark ocean on every side—*mare tenebrosum*—and may be introduced as an illustration of this passage in Job. It is the map of Sanudo, annexed to Bongar's "*Gesta Dei per Francos*." In this map, Jerusalem, according to the prevailing views, "is placed in the centre of the world, as the point to which every other object is to be referred; the earth is made a circle, surrounded by the ocean, the shores of which are represented as everywhere nearly equidistant from that spiritual capital, the site of which is, indeed, remarkable for its relation to the three continents, Asia, Europe, and Africa. Persia stands in its proper place; but India, under the modifica-

tions of Greater and Lesser, is confusedly repeated at different points, while the river Indus is mentioned in the text as the Eastern boundary of Asia. To the North, the castle of Gog and Magog, an Arabian feature, crowns a vast range of mountains, within which, it is said, that the Tartars had been imprisoned by Alexander the Great. The Caspian appears, with the bordering countries of Georgia, Hyrcania, and Albania; but these features stand nearly at the Northern boundary of the habitable earth. Africa has a sea to the South, stated, however, to be inaccessible on account of the intensity of the heat. The European countries stand in their due place, not even excepting Russia and Scandinavia, though some oversights are observable in the manner in which the two are connected together."



similar view prevails among the modern Egyptians. "Of geography, the Egyptians, in general, and with very few exceptions, the best instructed among them, have scarcely any knowledge. Some few of the learned venture to assert that the earth is a globe, but they are opposed by a great majority of the 'Oolama. The common opinion of all the Moos'lims is, that the earth is an almost plane expanse, surrounded by the ocean, which they say is encompassed by a chain of mountains called Cka'f." Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, vol. i. p. 281. A similar view of the world prevails, also, now among the Independent Nestorians, which may be regarded

as the ancient prevailing opinion in Persia, handed down by tradition. "According to their views of geography," says Dr. Grant, "the earth is a vast plain, surrounded by the ocean, in which a *leviathan* plays around, to keep the water in motion, and prevent its becoming stagnant and putrid; and this *leviathan* is of such enormous length, that his head follows his tail in the circuit round the earth! That I had crossed the ocean, where I must have encountered the monster, was a thing almost incredible." The Nestorians, p. 100. In ancient times, it was regarded as impossible to penetrate far into the sea surrounding the earth, on

11 The pillars of heaven tremble<sup>h</sup> and are astonished at his reproof.

12 He<sup>i</sup> divideth the sea with

<sup>h</sup> He. 12. 26.

<sup>i</sup> Ex. 14. 21. Is. 51. 15.

account of the thick darkness, and it was believed that after sailing for any considerable distance on that sea, the light would wholly fail. In the ninth century, the Arabic historians tell us, that the brothers Almagrurim sailed from Lisbon due west, designing, if possible, to discover the countries beyond the "sea of darkness." For ten or eleven days, they steered westward; but, seeing a storm approaching, the light faint, and the sea tempestuous they feared that they had come to the dark boundaries of the earth. They turned, therefore, south, sailed twelve days in that direction, and came to an island which they called Ganam, or the island of birds, but the flesh of these birds was too bitter to be eaten. They sailed on twelve days farther, and came to another island, the king of which assured them that their pursuit was vain; that his father had sent an expedition for the same purpose; but that, after a month's sail, the light had wholly failed, and they had been obliged to return. A great amount of interesting and valuable information, on the ancient views of the geography of the world, may be seen in the *Encyclopædia of Geography*, vol. i. pp. 9—68. It is not easy to ascertain what were the exact views in the time of Job, but it is quite probable, from the passage before us, that the earth was supposed to be surrounded by an ocean, and that the outer limits were encompassed with deep and impenetrable darkness. ¶ *Until the day and night come to an end.* Marg., *end of light with darkness.* The true meaning is, to the confines of light and darkness. To the end, or extremity (תְּהִלָּה — *perfection, completion*) of the light with the darkness; that is, where the light terminates in the darkness. *Where that limit was, or how the sun was supposed to pass around it, or could pass over it without illuminating it, it is now impossible to ascertain.* The prevailing views on

his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through<sup>l</sup> the proud.<sup>k</sup>

<sup>l</sup> *pride.*

<sup>k</sup> Da. 4. 37.

geography and astronomy must have been very obscure, and there must have been many things which they could not pretend to comprehend or explain.

11. *The pillars of heaven tremble.* That is, the mountains, which seem to bear up the heavens. So, among the ancients, Mount Atlas was represented as one of the pillars of heaven. Virgil speaks of "Atlas whose brawny back supports the skies." And Hesiod, ver. 785, advances the same notion:

"Atlas, so hard necessity ordains,  
Great, the ponderous vault of stars sustains,  
Not far from the Hesperides he stands,  
Nor from the load retracts his head or hands."

The word "*reproof*" in this verse refers to the language of God, as if spoken in anger to rebuke the mountains or the earth. Perhaps the reference is to thunder, to storms, and to winds, which seem to be the voice of God. Comp. Ps. xxix. 3—8. Similar descriptions of the majesty and glory of God abound in the Scriptures, where he speaks to the earth, the mountains, the hills, and they tremble. Thus in Ps. civ. 32.

"He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth;  
He toucheth the hills, and they smoke."

So in Habak. iii. 10:

"The mountains saw thee, and they trembled;  
The overflowing of the water passed by;  
The deep uttered his voice, and lift up his hands on high."

So in Nahum i. 5, "The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his presence."

12. *He divideth the sea with his power* Herder renders this:

"By his power he scourgeth the sea,  
By his wisdom he bindeth its pride."

Jerome (Vulg.), "By his power the seas are suddenly congregated together." The LXX, "By his power—*κατ' ἐνάυσσιν τὴν θάλασσαν*—he makes the sea calm." Luther, Vor seiner Kraft wird das Meer plötzlich ungestum—"By his power the sea becomes suddenly tempestuous." Noyes renders it, "By his power he

13 By his spirit he <sup>1</sup> hath gar-

I Ps. 33. 6, 7.

stiltheth the sea." This is undoubtedly the true meaning. There is no allusion here to the dividing of the sea when the Israelites left Egypt; but the idea is, that God has power to calm the tempest, and hush the waves into peace. The word here used (נָחַת) means, to make afraid, to terrify; especially, to restrain by threats. See Notes on Isa. li. 15. Comp. Jer. xxxi. 35. The reference here is to the exertion of the power of God, by which he is able to calm the tumultuous ocean, and to restore it to repose after a storm—one of the most striking exhibitions of omnipotence that can be conceived of. ¶ *By his understanding.* By his wisdom. ¶ *He smiteth through.* He scourges, or strikes—as if to punish. ¶ *The proud.* The pride of the sea. The ocean is represented as enraged, and as lifted up with pride and rebellion. God scourges it, rebukes it, and makes it calm.

13. *By his spirit.* The word *spirit* here is either synonymous with *wisdom*,—referring to the wisdom by which God made the heavens; or with *breath*—meaning, that he did it by his own command. There is no evidence that Job refers to the Third Person of the Trinity—the Holy Spirit—as being specially engaged in the work of creation. The word *spirit* is often used to denote one's self; and the meaning here is, that God had done it. This was one of the exhibitions of his power and skill. ¶ *He hath garnished the heavens.* He has formed the stars which constitute so beautiful an ornament of the heavens. ¶ *His hand hath formed the crooked serpent.* Or, rather, the *fleeing serpent*—נָחַת שֶׁרֶפ. See Notes on Isa. xxvii. 1. There can be no doubt that Job refers here to one of the constellations, which it seems was then known as the serpent or dragon. The practice of forming pictures of the heavens, with a somewhat fanciful resemblance to animals, was one of the most early devices of astronomy, and was evidently known in the time of Job. Comp. Notes on ch. ix. 9. The object was, probably,

nished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.

to aid the memory; and though the arrangement is entirely arbitrary, and the resemblance wholly fanciful, yet it is still continued in the works of astronomy, as a convenient help to the memory, and as aiding in the description of the heavenly bodies. This is probably the same constellation which is described by Virgil, in language that strikingly resembles that here used by Job:

"Maximus hic flexu sinuoso elabitur anguis  
Circum, perque duas in morem fluminis  
Arctos,  
Arctos oceani metuentes æquore tingi."  
Geor. i. 244.

"Around our pole the spiry Dragon glides,  
And, like a winding stream, the Bears divides;  
The less and greater, who by Fate's decree  
Abhor to die beneath the Southern sea."  
DRYDEN.

The figure of the Serpent, or "the Dragon," is still one of the constellations of the heavens, and there can be little doubt that it is the same that is referred to in this ancient book. On the celestial globes it is drawn between the Ursa Major and Cepheus, and is made to embrace the pole of the ecliptic in its convolutions. The head of the monster is under the foot of Hercules; then there is a coil tending eastwardly about 17° north of Lyra; then he winds northwardly about 14° to the second coil, where he reaches almost to the girdle of Cepheus; then he loops down and makes a third coil somewhat in the shape of the letter U, about 15°, below the first; and then he holds a westerly course for about 13°, and passes between the head of the Greater and the tail of the Lesser Bear. The constellation has eighty stars; including four of the second magnitude, seven of the third, and twelve of the fourth. The *origin* of the name given to this constellation, and the *reason* why it was given, are unknown. It has been supposed that the Dragon in his tortuous windings is symbolical of the oblique course of the stars, and particularly that it was designed to designate the motion of the pole of the equator around the

14 Lo, these *are* parts <sup>m</sup> of his ways: but how little a portion is

*m* 1 Co. 13. 9, 12.

pole of the ecliptic, produced by the precession of the equinoxes. It may be doubted, however, whether this is not a refinement; for the giving of a name for such a cause must have been based on knowledge much in advance of that which was possessed when this name was given. Mythologists say, that Draco was the watchful dragon which guarded the golden apples in the garden of the Hesperides, near Mount Atlas, in Africa, and which was slain by Hercules. Juno is said to have taken the Dragon up to heaven, and to have made a constellation of him, as a reward for his faithful services. The origin of the division of the stars into constellations is now unknown. It has been known from the earliest times, and is found in all nations; and it is remarkable that about the same mode of division is observed, and about the same names are given to the constellations. This would seem to indicate that they had a common origin; and probably that is to be found in Chaldea, Arabia, or Egypt. Sir Isaac Newton regards Egypt as the parental point; Sir William Jones, Chaldea; Mr. Montucla, Arabia. There is probably no book earlier than this of Job, and the mention here of the names of the constellations is probably the first on record. If so, then the first *intimation* that we have of them was from Arabia; but still it may have been that Job derived his views from Egypt or Chaldea. The *sense* in the passage before us is, that the greatness and glory of God are seen by forming the beautiful and the glorious constellations that adorn the sky.

14. *Lo, these are parts of his ways.* This is a small portion of his works. We see only the outlines, the surface of his mighty doings. This is still true. With all the advances which have been made in science, it is still true that we see but a small part of his works.

heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?

What we are enabled to trace with all the aids of science, compared with what is unseen and unknown, may be like the analysis of a single drop of water compared with the ocean. ¶ *But how little a portion is heard of him?* Or, rather, "But what a faint whisper have we heard of him!" Literally, "What a whisper of a word," *וְכַח שִׁפְחָה דְּבָרָא*. The word *שִׁפְחָה* means a transient sound rapidly passing away; and then a *whisper*. See Notes on ch. iv. 12. A "whisper of a word" means a word not fully and audibly spoken, but which is *whispered* into the ear; and the beautiful idea here is, that what we see of God, and what he makes known to us, compared with the full and glorious reality, bears about the same relation which the gentlest whisper does to words that are fully spoken. ¶ *The thunder of his power who can understand?* It is probable that there is here a comparison between the gentle "whisper" and the mighty "thunder;" and that the idea is, if, instead of speaking to us in gentle whispers, and giving to us in that way some faint indications of his nature, he were to speak out in thunder, who could understand him? If, when he speaks in such faint and gentle tones, we are so much impressed with a sense of his greatness and glory, who would not be overwhelmed if he were to speak out as in thunder? Thus explained, the expression does not refer to literal thunder, though there is much in the heavy peal to excite adoring views of God, and much that to Job must have been inexplicable. It may be asked, even now, who can understand all the philosophy of the thunder? But with much more impressiveness it may be asked, as Job probably meant to ask, who could understand the great God, if he spoke out with the full voice of his thunder, instead of speaking in a gentle whisper?

## CHAPTER XXVII.

## ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

It would seem to have been natural that Zophar should have replied here to what Job had said; and the commencement of this chapter appears to indicate that there had been a pause made here by Job, under an expectation that he would speak. It was now his turn, in the regular course of the controversy, but he was silent. Bildad had made a feeble reply (ch. xxv.), and Zophar did not attempt to say anything, and the three friends return to the controversy no more. Seeing, therefore, that nothing was said in reply, Job resumes his remarks, and urges his sentiments at length. This reaches to the close of ch. xxxi.

Chs. xxvii. and xxviii. have immediate reference to the controversy which had been maintained, and contain such suggestions as seem to have satisfied the friends of Job that he was right in his main positions, or at least such as to induce them to remain silent. The following points are introduced and discussed in this chapter.

He begins with a most solemn asseveration that he would speak only the truth, and would never be found the advocate for error. For the sincerity of this intention, he makes a direct appeal to the living God, vs. 2—4. He then as solemnly re-asserts his own innocence, and says that he *could* not justify the sentiments which had been advanced, nor could he renounce his own consciousness of integrity, and concede, as his friends wished him to do, that his sufferings were proof of extraordinary guilt, vs. 5, 6. He then proceeds to say, that he had no idea of justifying the wicked or the hypocrite. On account of the sentiments which he had advanced, his enemies had charged him with this; but he denies it now in the most solemn manner. He expresses his abhorrence of a wicked character; says that he believes their fate will be all that a man could wish his enemy to experience, and expresses a firm conviction that the hope of the hypocrite would fail. In this he accorded entirely with all that they had said, vs. 7—10. He then states that he himself held that the wicked would be punished, and proceeds to defend that position. This defence occupies the remainder of the chapter. He had maintained, in opposition to his friends, that it was not a regular and universal principle of the divine administration that men were dealt with in this world according to their character, and that *no certain* conclusion could be drawn respecting a man's character from the divine dealings with him in this world. In particular, he had shown, by an appeal to *facts*, that the wicked live and prosper; that they often reach a peaceful old age, and die surrounded by every circumstance of affluence and honor. The appeal to these facts, which his friends could not deny, had done much to settle the controversy. But now, having silenced them, he *admits* that this was not *an universal principle*; states that he does not mean to say that men are *never* dealt with according to their crimes, or to maintain that God has no moral government in this world. He goes on, therefore, to show (vs. 11—23) that it was a great principle of the divine administration that the wicked would be destroyed; that if they were prospered for a time, destruction would certainly come, and that they could not hope to escape with impunity. He does not deny his main position that the innocent suffer, and that the wicked are prospered, nor does he admit *their* main position, that great sufferings are necessarily proof of great guilt;—but he *dors* concede that there was truth in the general principle that the wicked *would be punished*. This he was not disposed to deny; and having showed them before that their main positions were wrong, and their application of their position to him cruel and uncalled for, he now shows exactly where the truth is, and concedes that, however prosperous the wicked may be for a time, they will certainly be punished. In this way the controversy is brought to a close. He states, therefore, that though the children of a wicked man are multiplied, it will be for the sword; though he heap up silver, he shall not be permitted always to enjoy it; though he build his house, he shall soon lie down in the dust; though he be prospered, yet he shall be swept away as by a storm; and though men may honor him for a while, yet they shall hiss him finally out of the world. If there seems to be some inconsistency here with the views which he had before expressed, they are, nevertheless, not inconsistent with the general *principles* which he had maintained. It is only in some expressions which he may have formerly used in the heat of argument, and under the severity of suffering, that there seems to be anything irreconcilable with what he here lays down. It was important that he should admit what he here states, lest it might be inferred that he denied altogether the government of God over the world. This is *one* mode of explaining a difficulty which has been felt in regard to the meaning of the latter part of this chapter, vs. 13—23. See, however, the Notes on ver. 13. Perhaps the solution there suggested will commend itself to many minds as being more probably correct.

**M**OREOVER Job <sup>1</sup> continued | his parable, and said,  
<sup>1</sup> added to take up.

1. Job continued. Marg., as in Heb., paused for Zophar to reply, but since  
 added to take up. Probably he had he said nothing, he now resumed his



2 *As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment; and the Almighty, who hath vexed my soul;*

3 *All the while my breath is in*

<sup>1</sup> *made my soul bitter.* Ru. 1. 20.

argument. ¶ *His parable.* A parable properly denotes a comparison of one thing with another, or a fable or allegorical representation from which moral instruction is derived. It was a favorite mode of conveying truth in the East, and indeed is found in all countries. See Notes on Matth. xiii. 3. It is evident, however, that Job did not deliver his sentiments in this manner; and the word rendered "*parable*" here (פָּרָבֹלָה) means, as it often does, a sententious discourse or argument. The word is used in the Scriptures to denote a parable, properly so called; then a sententious saying; an apophthegm; a proverb; or a poem or song. See Notes, Isa. xiv. 4. It is rendered here by the Vulgate, parabolam; by the LXX, παραβολή—"Job spake by preface;" Luther, fuhr, fort—"Job continued;" Noyes, discourse; Good, high argument. The meaning is, that Job continued his discourse; but there is in the word a reference to the kind of discourse which he employed, as being sententious and apophthegmatical.

2. *As God liveth.* A form of solemn adjuration, or an oath by the living God. "As certainly as God lives." It is the form by which God himself often swears. See Ezek. xiv. 16; xxxiii. 11, and is often employed by others. 1 Sam. xx. 3; xxv. 26. ¶ *Who hath taken away my judgment.* Who hath rejected my cause, or who hath refused me justice; that is, who has treated me as though I was guilty, and withholds from me relief. The language is forensic, and the idea is, that he would make his solemn appeal to him, even though he had rejected his cause. Perhaps there is implied here more than the solemnity of an ordinary oath. A man might be supposed to be willing to make his appeal to one who had shown himself friendly or favorable to him, but he

me, and the <sup>2</sup> spirit of God is in my nostrils;

4 *My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.*

<sup>2</sup> i. e. the breath which God gave him. Ge. 2. 7.

would manifest more reluctance to making his appeal in an important case to a judge who had decided against him, especially if that decision was regarded as severe, and if that judge had refused to hear what he had to say in self-defence. But Job here says, that such was his confidence in his own sincerity and truth, that he could make his appeal to God, even though he knew that he had hitherto gone against him, and treated him as if he were guilty. ¶ *Who hath vexed my soul.* Marg., as in Heb., made my soul bitter. That is, who has greatly afflicted me. Comp. 2 Kings iv. 27, Murg., and Ruth i. 20.

3. *And the spirit of God is in my nostrils.* As long as I live. The "spirit of God" here means the breath that God breathed into man when he created him. Gen. ii. 7. It would seem probable that there was an allusion to that fact by the language here, and that the knowledge of the way in which man was created was thus handed down by tradition.

4. *My lips shall not speak wickedness.* This solemn profession made on oath might have done something to allay the suspicions of his friends in regard to him, and to show that they had been mistaken in his character. It is a solemn assurance that he did not mean to vindicate the cause of wickedness, or to say one word in its favor; and that as long as he lived he would never be found advocating it. ¶ *Nor my tongue utter deceit.* I will never make any use of sophistry; I will not attempt to make "the worse appear the better reason;" I will not be the advocate of error. This had always been the aim of Job, and he now says that no circumstance should ever induce him to pursue a different course as long as he lived. Probably, he means, also, as the following verse seems to imply, that no conside-

5 God forbid that I should justify you: till I die I will not remove mine <sup>a</sup> integrity from me.

6 My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart

a c. 2. 3, 9.

ration should ever induce him to countenance error or to palliate wrong. He would not be deterred from expressing his sentiments by any dread of opposition, or even by any respect for his friends. No friendship which he might have for them would induce him to justify what he honestly regarded as error.

5. *God forbid.* הִנֵּחֵ ה' "Far be it from me." Literally, "Profane be it to me;" that is, I should regard it as unholy and profane; I cannot do it. ¶ *That I should justify you.* That I should admit the correctness of your positions, and should concede that I am a hypocrite. He was conscious of integrity and sincerity, and nothing could induce him to abandon that conviction, or to admit the correctness of the reasoning which they had pursued in regard to him. Coverdale (A.D. 1535) has given this a correct translation, "God forbid that I should grant your cause to be right." ¶ *Till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me.* I will not admit that I am insincere and hypocritical. This is the language of a man who was conscious of integrity, and who would not be deprived of that consciousness by any plausible representations of his professed friends.

6. *My righteousness I hold fast.* I hold on to the consciousness of integrity and uprightness. I cannot, will not part with that. Job had lost his property, his health, and his domestic comforts, but he had in all this one consolation—he felt that he was sincere. He had been subjected to calamity by God as if he were a wicked man, but still he was resolved to adhere to the consciousness of his uprightness. Property may leave a man; friends may forsake him; children may die; disease may attack him; slander may assail him; and death may approach him;

<sup>b</sup> shall not reproach me <sup>1</sup> so long as I live.

7 Let mine enemy be as the wicked, and he that riseth up against me as the unrighteous.

<sup>b</sup> Ac. 24. 16. 1 Jno. 3. 19—21. <sup>1</sup> from my days.

but still he may have in his bosom one unfailing source of consolation; he may have the consciousness that his aim has been right and pure. That nothing can shake; of that, no storms or tempests, no malignant foe, no losses or disappointment, no ridicule or calumny, can deprive him. ¶ *My heart shall not reproach me.* That is, as being insincere, false, hollow. ¶ *So long as I live.* Marg., from my days. So the Hebrew—וְיָמַי. Vulg., in omni vita mea. Sept., "I am not conscious to myself of having done anything amiss"—ἀνομιὰ πράξαζ. Comp. Notes on 1 Cor. iv. 4. The idea is, that he had a consciousness of integrity, and that he meant to maintain it as long as he lived.

7. *Let mine enemy be as the wicked.* This is probably said that he might show that it was not his intention to justify the wicked, and that in all that he had said it was no part of his purpose to express approbation of their course. His friends had charged him with this; but he now solemnly disclaims it, and says that he had no such design. To show how little he meant to justify the wicked, he says that the utmost that he could desire for an enemy would be, that he would be treated as he believed the wicked would be. A similar expression occurs in Dan. iv. 19, "My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies;" that is, calamities are coming upon thee indicated by the dream, such as you would desire on your foes. So in Judges v. 31. After the mother of Sisera had anxiously looked for the return of her son from the battle, though he was then slain, the sacred writer adds, "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord." Thus when a traitor is executed, it is common for the executioner to hold up his head and say, "So let all the enemies of the king

8 For <sup>c</sup> what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?

<sup>c</sup> Mat. 16. 26.

die." Job means to say, that he had no sympathy with wicked men, and that he believed that they would be punished as certainly and as severely as one could desire his enemy to suffer. Schnurrer supposes that by the *enemy* here he refers to his friends with whom he had been disputing; but this is to give an unnecessarily harsh construction to the passage.

8. *For what is the hope of the hypocrite.* The same sentiment which Job here advances had before been expressed by Bildad. See it explained in the Notes on ch. viii. 13, seq. It had also been expressed in a similar manner by Zophar, Notes, ch. xx. 5, and had been much insisted on in their arguments. Job now says that he fully accords with that belief. He was not disposed to defend hypocrisy; he had no sympathy for it. He knew, as they did, that all the joy of a hypocrite would be temporary, and that when death came it must vanish. He wishes that his remarks should not be construed so as to make him the advocate of hypocrisy or sin, and affirms that he relied on a more solid foundation of peace and joy than the hypocrite could possess. It was by explanations and admissions such as these that the controversy was gradually closed, and when they came fully to understand Job, they felt that they had nothing which they could reply to him. ¶ *Though he hath gained—*

*וַיִּצְלַח*. The Vulgate renders this, *si avarè rapiat*—"if he avariciously seizes upon." The LXX, *ὅτι ἐπέρχεται*—"that he persisteth. Dr. Good, "That he should prosper;" and so Wemyss. The Hebrew word (*וַיִּצְלַח*) means, properly, to cut or dash in pieces; then to tear in pieces, or to plunder or spoil; then to cut off, to bring to an end, &c. It is applied to the action of a weaver, who, when his web is finished, cuts off the thrum that binds it to the beam. The web is then *finished*; it is all woven, and is then

9 Will God hear <sup>d</sup> his cry when trouble cometh upon him?

<sup>d</sup> Pr. 1. 28.

taken from the loom. Hence it is elegantly used to denote the close of life, when life is woven or finished—by the rapid passing of days like the weaver's shuttle (Job vii. 6), and when it is then, as it were, taken out of the loom. See this figure explained in the Notes on Isaiah xxxviii. 12. This is the idea here, that life would be cut off like the weaver's web, and that when that was done the hope of the hypocrite would be of no value. ¶ *When God taketh away his soul?* When he dies. There has been much perplexity felt in regard to the Hebrew word here rendered "taketh away"—*יִסְּרֶה*. A full explanation may be seen in Schultens and Rosenmüller. Some suppose it is the future from *סָרַח* for *יִסְּרֶה*—meaning *to draw out*, and that the idea is, that God *draws out* this life as a sword is drawn out of a sheath. Others, that it is from *יָסַר*—*to be secure*, or *tranquil*, or *at rest*; and that it refers to the time when God shall give *rest* in the grave, or that the meaning of the word *יִסְּרֶה* here is the same as *יִסְּרֶה* or *יִסְּרֶה*—*to draw out*. See Gesenius on the word *יִסְּרֶה*. Schnurrer conjectures that it is derived from *שָׁאַל*—*to ask*, *to demand*, and that the form here is contracted from the future *שָׁאַל*. But the common supposition is, that it means *to draw out*—in allusion to drawing out a sword from a scabbard—thus drawing life or the soul from the body.

9. *Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?* Coverdale has rendered this (vs. 8, 9) so as to make excellent sense, though not strictly in accordance with the original. "What hope hath the hypocrite though he have great good, and though God give him riches after his heart's desire? Doth God hear him the sooner, when he crieth unto him in his necessity?" The object of the verse is to show the miserable condition of a wicked man or a

10 Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God?

*c* Mat. 13. 21.

hypocrite. This is shown by the fact which Job asserts, that God will not hear his cry when he feels his need of aid, and when he is induced to call upon him. This is true only when his object in calling upon God is *merely* for help. If he has no relents for his sin, and no real confidence in God; if he calls upon him in trouble, intending to return to his sins as soon as the trouble is over, or if such is the state of his mind that God sees that he *would* return to his sins as soon as his calamities cease, then he cannot be expected to hear him. But if he comes with a penitent heart, and with a sincere purpose to forsake his sins and to devote himself to God, there is no reason to doubt that he would hear him. The argument of Job is in the main sound. It is, that if a man wishes the favor of God, and the assurance that he will hear his prayer, he must lead a holy life. A hypocrite cannot expect his favor. Comp. Notes on Isa. i. 15.

10. *Will he delight himself in the Almighty?* A truly pious man *will* delight himself in the Almighty. His supreme happiness will be found in God. He has pleasure in the contemplation of his existence, his perfections, his law, and his government. Coverdale renders this, "Hath he such pleasure and delight in the Almighty, that he dare alway call upon God?" The idea of Job is, that a hypocrite has not his delight in the Almighty; and, therefore, his condition is not such as *he* would defend or choose. Job had been charged with defending the character of the wicked, and with maintaining that they were the objects of the divine favor. He now says that he maintained no such opinion. He was aware that the only real and solid happiness was to be found in God, and he knew that a hypocrite would not find delight there. This is true to the letter. A hypocrite has no real happiness in God. He sees nothing

11 I will teach you <sup>1</sup> by the hand of God: *that* which is with the Almighty will I not conceal.

<sup>1</sup> or, being in.

in the divine perfections to love; nothing in the divine plans that commands and secures his affections. The hypocrite, therefore, is a miserable man. He professes to love what he does not love; tries to find pleasure in what his heart hates; mingles with a people with whom he has no sympathy, and joins in services of prayer and praise which are disgusting and irksome to his soul. The pious man rejoices that there is just such a God as JEHOVAH is. He sees nothing in him which he desires to be changed, and he has supreme delight in the contemplation of his perfections. ¶ *Will he always call upon God?* That is, he will not always call upon God. This is literally true. The hypocrite prays (1,) when he makes a profession of religion; (2,) on some extraordinary occasion—as when a friend is sick, or when he feels that he himself is about to die, but he does not *always* maintain habits of prayer. He suffers his business to break in upon his times for prayer; neglects secret devotion on the slightest pretence, and soon abandons it altogether. One of the best tests of character is the feeling with which we pray, and the habit which we have of calling on God. The man who *loves* secret prayer has one of the most certain evidences that he is a pious man. Comp. Notes, ch. xx. 5.

11. *I will teach you by the hand of God.* Marg., "or being in." Coverdale, "In the name of God." So Tindal. Noyes, "Concerning the hand of God." Good, "Concerning the dealings of God." The Chaldee renders it נִתְּנָתָא אֵלֶיָּהּ—"By the prophecy of God." Luther, "I will teach you by the hand of God." The idea evidently is, that Job would instruct them by what God *had* done. He would appeal to his works, and to the dispensations of his providence; and by the indications of wisdom and skill which were to be found there, he would derive important

12 Behold, all ye yourselves have seen it; why then are ye thus altogether vain?

13 This is the portion of a

lessons for their instruction on the great principles of his administration. Accordingly, in the remainder of this chapter, he makes his appeal to what actually occurs in the dispensations of Providence, and in the next, he refers to various scientific subjects, evincing the wisdom which God had shown in the mineral kingdom. The *hand* is the instrument by which we accomplish anything, and hence it is here used to denote *what God does*. ¶ *That which is with the Almighty will I not conceal*. That is, I will appeal to his works, and show what traces of wisdom there are in them.

12. *Behold, all ye yourselves have seen it*. You have had an opportunity of tracing the proofs of the wisdom of God in his works. ¶ *Why then are ye thus altogether vain?* Why is it that you maintain such opinions—that you evince no more knowledge of his government and plans—that you argue so inconclusively about him and his administration? Why, since you have had an opportunity of observing the course of events, do you maintain that suffering is necessarily a proof of guilt, and that God deals with all men, in this life, according to their character? A close observation of the course of events would have taught you otherwise. Job proceeds to state what he supposes to be the exact truth on the subject, and particularly aims, in the following chapter, to show that the ways of God are inscrutable, and that we cannot be expected to comprehend them, and are not competent to pronounce upon them.

13. *This is the portion of a wicked man with God*. There has been much diversity of view in regard to the remainder of this chapter. The difficulty is, that Job seems here to state the same things which had been maintained by his friends, and against which he had all along contended. This difficulty has been felt to be very great, and is very

wicked man with God, and the heritage of oppressors, *which* they shall receive of the Almighty.

great. It cannot be denied that there is a great resemblance between the sentiments here expressed and those which had been maintained by his friends, and that this speech, if offered by them, would have accorded entirely with their main position. Job *seems* to abandon all which he had defended, and to concede all which he had so warmly condemned. One mode of explaining the difficulty has been suggested in the "Analysis" of the chapter. It was proposed by Noyes, and is plausible, but, perhaps, will not be regarded as satisfactory to all. Dr. Kennicott supposes that the text is imperfect, and that these verses constituted the third speech of Zophar. His arguments for this opinion are, (1.) That Eliphaz and Bildad had each spoken three times, and that we are naturally led to expect a third speech from Zophar; but, according to the present arrangement, there is none. (2.) That the sentiments accord exactly with what Zophar might be expected to advance, and are exactly in his style; that they are expressed in "his fierce manner of accusation," and are "in the very place where Zophar's speech is naturally expected." But the objections to this view are insuperable. They are, (1.) The entire want of any authority in the manuscripts, or ancient versions, for such an arrangement or supposition. All the ancient versions and manuscripts make this a part of the speech of Job. (2.) If this had been a speech of Zophar, we should have expected a reply to it, or an allusion to it, in the speech of Job which follows. But no such reply or allusion occurs. (3.) If the form which is usual on the opening of a speech, "And Zophar answered and said," had ever existed here, it is incredible that it should have been removed. But it occurs in no manuscript or version; and it is not allowable to make such an alteration in the Scripture by conjecture. Wemys, in his translation of Job, accords with the view of Kenni-

14 If <sup>f</sup> his children be multiplied, *it is* for the sword; and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread.

<sup>f</sup> De. 28. 41. 2 Ki. 9. 7, 8. Hos. 9. 13.

cott, and makes these verses (13—23) to be the third speech of Zophar. For this, however, he alleges no *authority*, and no reasons except such as had been suggested by Kennicott. Coverdale, in his translation of the Bible (A.D. 1553), has inserted the word “saying” at the close of ver. 12, and regards what follows to the end of the chapter as an enumeration or recapitulation of the false sentiments which they had maintained, and which Job regards as the “vain” things (ver. 12) which they had maintained. In support of this view, the following reasons may be alleged: (1.) It avoids all the difficulty of transposition, and the necessity of inserting an introduction, as we must do, if we suppose it to be a speech of Zophar. (2.) It avoids the difficulty of supposing that Job had here contradicted the sentiments which he had before advanced, or of conceding all that his friends had maintained. (3.) It is in accordance with the practice of the speakers in this book, and the usual practice of debaters, who enumerate at considerable length the sentiments which they regard as erroneous, and which they design to oppose. (4.) It is the most simple and natural supposition, and, therefore, most likely to be the true one. Still, it must be admitted, that the passage is attended with difficulty; but the above solution is, it seems to me, the most plausible. ¶ *This is the portion.* This is what he receives; to wit, what he states in the following verses, that his children would be cut off. ¶ *And the heritage of oppressors.* What tyrants and cruel men must expect to receive at the hand of God.

14 *If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword.* That is, they shall be slain in war. The first calamities which it is here said would come upon a man, relate to his family (vs. 14—18); the next are those that would come upon himself, vs. 19—23. All the sentiments

15 Those that remain of him shall be buried in death: and his widows shall not weep. <sup>g</sup>

<sup>g</sup> Ps. 78. 64.

here expressed are found in the various speeches of the friends of Job, and, according to the interpretation suggested above, this is designed to represent their sentiments. They maintained that if a wicked man was blessed with a numerous family, and seemed to be prosperous, it was only that the punishment might come the more heavily upon him, for that they certainly would be cut off. See ch. xviii. 19, 20; xx. 10. ¶ *And his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread.* This sentiment was advanced by Zophar, ch. xx. 10. See Notes on that verse.

15. *Those that remain of him.* Those that survive him. ¶ *Shall be buried in death.* Heb., “shall be buried by death” (מָוַת), that is, “Death shall be the grave-digger”—or, they shall have no friends to bury them; they shall be unburied. The idea is highly poetical, and the expression is very tender. They would have no one to weep over them, and no one to prepare for them a grave; there would be no procession, no funeral dirge, no train of weeping attendants; even the members of their own family would not weep over them. To be unburied has always been regarded as a dishonor and calamity (comp. Notes on Isa. xiv. 19), and is often referred to as such in the Scriptures. See Jer. viii. 2; xiv. 16; xvi. 4, 6. The passage here has a striking resemblance to Jer. xxii. 18, 19:

“They shall not lament for him, saying,  
Ah! my brother! or, Ah! sister!  
They shall not lament for him, saying,  
Ah! lord! or, Ah! his glory!  
With the burial of an ass shall he be buried,  
Drawn out and cast beyond the gates of  
Jerusalem.”

¶ *And his widows shall not weep.* The plural here—“widows”—is a proof that polygamy was then practised. It is probable that Job here alludes to the shrieks of domestic grief which in the East are heard in every part of the

16 Though he heap up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay;

17 He may prepare it, but <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Ec. 2. 26.

house among the females on the death of the master of the family, or to the train of women that usually followed the corpse to the grave. The standing of a man in society was indicated by the length of the train of mourners, and particularly by the number of wives and concubines that followed him as weepers. Job refers to this as the sentiment of his friends, that when a wicked man died, he would die with such evident marks of the divine displeasure, that even his own family would not mourn for him, or that they would be cut off before his death, and none would be left to grieve.

16. *Though he heap up silver as the dust.* That is, in great quantities—as plenty as dust. Comp. 1 Kings x. 27, “And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones.” ¶ *And prepare raiment.* Oriental wealth consisted much in changes of raiment. Sir John Chardin says, that in the East it is common to gather together immense quantities of furniture and clothes. According to D’Herbelot, Bokteri, an illustrious poet of Cufah in the ninth century, had so many presents made him in the course of his life, that when he died he was found possessed of an hundred complete suits of clothes, two hundred shirts, and five hundred turbans. Comp. Ezra ii. 69; and Neh. vii. 70. See Bochart Hieroz. p. ii. lib. iv. c. xxv. p. 617. This species of treasure is mentioned by Virgil:

“Dives equum, dives picta vestis et auri.”  
ÆN. ix. 26.

The reason why wealth consisted so much in changes of raiment, is to be found in the fondness for display in Oriental countries, and in the fact that as fashions never change there, such treasures are valuable until they are worn out. In the ever-varying fashions of the West such treasures are comparatively of much less value. ¶ *As*

the just shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver.

18 He buildeth his house as a moth, and as a booth *that* the keeper maketh.

*the clay.* As the dust of the streets; or as abundant as mire.

17. *The just shall put it on.* The righteous shall wear it. It shall pass out of the hands of him who prepared it, into the hands of others. The meaning is, that the wicked, though they become rich, would not live to enjoy their ill-gotten gains. These two verses contain a beautiful illustration of what Dr. Jebb calls *the introverted parallelism*—where the fourth member answers to the first, and the third to the second:

Though he heap up silver as the dust,  
And prepare raiment as the clay,  
The just shall put it [raiment] on,  
And the innocent shall divide the silver.

A similar instance occurs in Matt. vi. 6:

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs,  
Neither cast ye your pearls before swine,  
Lest they [the swine] trample them under  
their feet,  
And [the dogs] turn again and rend you.

For a full illustration of the nature of Hebrew poetry, the reader may consult De Wette, *Einleitung in die Psalmen*, translated in the *Biblical Repository*, vol. iii. pp. 445, seq. and Nordheimer’s *Hebrew Grammar*, vol. ii. pp. 319, seq. See also the Introduction to Job, § v. ¶ *The innocent shall divide the silver.* That is, the righteous shall come into possession of it, and divide it among themselves. The wicked who had gained it shall not be permitted to enjoy it.

18. *He buildeth his house as a moth.* The house which the moth builds is the slight fabric which it makes for its own dwelling in the garment which it consumes. On this verse comp. ch. viii. 14. The dwelling of the moth is composed of the materials of the garment on which it feeds, and there may be an allusion here not only to the fact that the house which the wicked reared for themselves would be temporary,

19 The rich <sup>i</sup> man shall lie down, but he shall not be gath-

<sup>i</sup> Lu. 16. 22, 23.

and that it would soon pass away like the dwelling of the moth, but that it was obtained—like the dwelling of the moth—at the expense of others. The idea of frailty, however, and of its being only a very temporary habitation, is probably the main thought in the passage. The allusion here is to the *moth-worm* as it proceeds from the egg, before it is changed into the chrysalis, aurelia, or nymph. “The young moth, upon leaving the egg which a papilio has lodged upon a piece of stuff, or a skin well dressed, and commodious for her purpose, immediately finds a habitation and food in the nap of the stuff, or hair of the skin. It gnaws and lives upon the nap, and likewise builds with it its apartment, accommodated both with a front door and a back one: the whole is well fastened to the ground of the stuff, with several cords and a little glue. The moth sometimes thrusts her head out of one opening, and sometimes out of the other, and perpetually demolishes all about her; and when she has cleared the place about her, she draws out all the stakes of the tent, after which she carries it to some little distance, and then fixes it with her slender cords in a new situation.” *Burder*. It is to the insect in its larvæ or caterpillar state that Job refers here, and the slightness of the habitation will be easily understood by any one who has watched the operations of the silk worm, or of the moths that appear in this country. The idea is, that the habitation which the wicked constructed was temporary and frail, and would soon be left. The Chaldee and Syriac render this “the spider;” and so does Luther—*Spinne*. The slight gossamer dwelling of the spider would well correspond with the idea here expressed by Job. ¶ *And as a booth*. A tent, or cottage. ¶ *That the keeper maketh*. That one who watches vineyards or gardens makes as a temporary shelter from the storm or the cold at night. Such edifices were very

ered: he openeth his eyes, and he is not.

frail in their structure, and were designed to be only temporary habitations. See the subject explained in Notes on Isa. i. 8. Niebuhr, in his description of Arabia, p. 158, says “In the mountains of Yemen they have a sort of nest on the trees, where the Arabs sit to watch the fields after they have been planted. But in the Kehama, where they have but few trees, they build a light kind of scaffolding for this purpose.” Mr. Southey opens the fifth part of his *Curse of Kehama* with a similar allusion:

“Evening comes on:—arising from the stream,  
Homeward the tall flamingo wings his flight;  
And when he sails athwart the setting beam,  
His scarlet plumage glows with deeper light.  
The WATCHMAN, at the wish’d approach of  
night,  
Gladly forsakes the field, where he all day,  
To scare the winged plunderers from their  
prey,  
With shout and sling, on yonder clay-built  
height,  
Hath borne the sultry ray.”

19. *The rich man*. That is, the rich man who is wicked. ¶ *Shall lie down*. Shall die—for so the connexion demands. ¶ *But he shall not be gathered*. In an honorable burial. The slain in battle are gathered together for burial; but he shall be unburied. The expressions “to be gathered,” “to be gathered to one’s fathers,” frequently occur in the Scriptures, and seem to be used to denote a peaceful and happy death and an honorable burial. There was the idea of a happy union with departed friends; of being honorably placed by their side in the grave, and admitted to companionship with them again in the unseen world. Comp. Gen. xxv. 8, xxxv. 29, xlix. 29, 33; Num. xxvii. 13; Deut. xxxii. 50; Jud. ii. 10; 2 Kings xxii. 20. Among the ancients, the opinion prevailed that the souls of those who were not buried in the customary manner, were not permitted to enter Hades, or the abodes of the dead, but were doomed to wander for an hundred years upon the banks of the river Styx. Thus Homer (*Iliad*, xxiii. 71, seq.) represents the spirit of Patro-



20 Terrors take hold on him as waters, a tempest stealeth him away in the night.

21 The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth: and as a <sup>k</sup> storm hurleth him out of his place.

& Ps. 58. 9.

clus as appearing to Achilles and praying him that he would commit his body with proper honors to the earth. So Palnurus is represented by Virgil (*Æneid*, vi. 365) as saying, "Cast earth upon me, that I may have a calm repose in death." The Hindoos, says Dr. Ward, believe that the souls of those who are unburied wander about and find no rest. It is possible that such views may have prevailed in the time of Job. The sentiment here is, that such an honored death would be denied the rich man of oppression and wickedness. ¶ *He openeth his eyes, and he is not.* That is, in the twinkling of an eye he is no more. From the midst of his affluence he is suddenly cut off, and hurried away in a moment.

20. *Terrors take hold on him as waters.* That is, as suddenly and violently as angry floods. Comp. Notes on ch. xviii. 14. ¶ *A tempest stealeth him away.* He is suddenly cut off by the wrath of God. A tempest comes upon him as unexpectedly as a thief or robber comes at night. Death is often represented as coming upon man with the silence of a thief, or the sudden violence of a robber at midnight. See Note, ch. xxi. 18, comp. *Matth.* xxiv. 42—44.

21. *The east wind carrieth him away.* He is swept off as by the violence of a tempest. Severe storms are represented in this book as coming from the East. Comp. Notes on ch. xv. 2. The ancients believed that men might be carried away by a tempest or whirlwind. Comp. *Isa.* xli. 16. See also *Homer*, *Odys.* xx. 63, seq.

"Snatch me, ye whirlwinds, far from human race,

Tost through the void illimitable space :

Or if dismounted from the rapid cloud,

Me with his whelming wave let Ocean shroud!"

POPE.

22 For God shall cast upon him, and not spare: <sup>1</sup> he would fain flee out of his hand.

23 Men shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place.

<sup>1</sup> in fleeing he would flee.

Comp. Notes on ch. xxx. 22. The parallelism here would seem to imply that the wind referred to was *violent*, but it is possible that the allusion may be to the burning winds of the desert, so well known in the East, and so frequently described by travellers. The Vulgate here renders the Hebrew word *רוּחַ*, *ventus urens*, "burning wind;" the LXX in like manner, *καύσων*; the Syriac simply *ܠܚܐܝܝܬ*, *wind*. This east wind, or burning wind, is what the Arabians call *سمر* *Samûm*. It is a hot wind which passes over the desert, and which was formerly supposed to be destructive of life. More recent travellers, however, tell us that it is not fatal to life, though exceedingly oppressive. ¶ *And as a storm.* See *Ps.* lvi. 9. ¶ *Hurleth him out of his place.* Takes him entirely away, or removes him from the earth.

22. *For God shall cast upon him.* That is, God shall bring calamities upon him, or cast his thunderbolts upon him, and shall not pity him. ¶ *He would fain flee.* He would gladly escape from the wrath of God, but he is unable to do it.

23. *Men shall clap their hands at him.* That is, they shall combine to drive him out of the world, and rejoice when he is gone. The same sentiment was also expressed by Bildad, ch. xviii. 18:

He shall be driven from light into darkness,  
And chased out of the world.

There can be no doubt, I think, that Job alluded to that sentiment, and that his object in quoting it is to show its incorrectness. He does not indeed go into a formal reply to it in the following chapters, but he seems to consider that he had already replied to it by the

statements which he had made, and which showed the incorrectness of the views which his friends had taken. He had demonstrated in the previous chapters that their main position was incorrect, and he asks (in verse 12 of this chapter), how it was possible that they could hold such sentiments as these, in the midst of all the *facts* which surrounded them? The whole current of events was against their opinion, and in the close of this chapter he enumerates the sentiments which they had advanced, which he regarded as so strange, and which he felt that he had now shown to be erroneous. Indeed, *they* seem to have regarded themselves as confuted,

for they were silent. Job had attacked and overthrown their main position, that men were treated according to their character in this life, and that consequently extraordinary sufferings were proof of extraordinary guilt, and, that being overthrown, they had nothing more to say. Having silenced them, and shown the error of the opinions which he has here enumerated, he proceeds in the following chapters to state his own views on important topics connected with the providence of God, mainly designed to show that we are not to expect fully to comprehend the reason of his dispensations.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

VARIOUS opinions have been entertained of the design of this chapter, and of the connection which it has with the preceding. A statement and examination of those opinions may be found in Schultens and in Rosenmüller. The most probable opinion, as it seems to me, is, that the design is to show that we must acquiesce in the inscrutable dispensations of divine Providence, without being able fully to comprehend them. The ways of God are high and mysterious. Vast wisdom is shown in his works, and there is much which man cannot comprehend. All his works are such as to excite the admiration of man. There is great obscurity in his dealings, and everywhere God had shown that his plans are far above those of man. The friends of Job had pretended to understand the reason of the divine dispensations. They had maintained that when men suffered they clearly comprehended the cause, and that the reason was that God dealt with them strictly according to their character. This position Job had controverted. He had showed that it was not true in fact. The wicked, he said, often lived long, and died in peace. But still, he admitted, that there was much which he could not understand. He did not know why they were thus permitted to live, and he did not know why the righteous were subjected to trials so severe. All this, he now says, is to be resolved into the superior and infinite wisdom of God, and in that it becomes man to acquiesce, even though he cannot now explain it. In illustration of this, he labors to show that man had made surprising discoveries in the works of nature; that he had penetrated the bowels of the earth, and had overcome the greatest obstacle in the attainment of knowledge and in the investigation of science, but still all that he had done or could do did not disclose to him the plans of the divine administration, or the reason of the divine dealings, and therefore true wisdom was to be found in the fear of the Lord, and in profound veneration for the Almighty. In showing this, Job adverts to the following topics:—

(1.) He refers to the skill which man had shown in operations of *mining*, and to the discoveries which he had made of the places of silver and gold, vs. 1, 2.

(2.) In these operations, man had penetrated to the greatest depths, so as to carry his discoveries far into the regions of night, vs. 3, 4.

(3.) He had wrought the earth, bringing food out of it; he had turned it up, and found out the places of precious stones, vs. 5, 6.

(4.) He had far surpassed the wisdom of the brute creation; he had gone where their sagacity could not lead them, and had penetrated into dark regions which the keen eye of the vulture had not seen, and where even the lion had not adventured, vs. 7, 8.

(5.) He had put forth extraordinary power. He had removed vast stones; had overturned mountains; had cut canals through mighty rocks, and had confined and bound the angry floods, vs. 9—11.

(6.) Yet still, Job says, none of these things revealed the secret plans of the divine administration. The wisdom which man sought was not to be found there. It was far above all the dis-

coveries of science, and all the mere investigations of nature. It had not been found in the abyss or in the sea; it could not be bought with gold or silver, with the sapphire, with coral or pearls; rubies and the topaz could not purchase it. Even Destruction and Death said that they had only heard of it with their ears, vs. 12—22.

(7.) It was to be found, therefore, only in God. He only understood the way of true wisdom, and the reason of his own plans; and it became man to acquiesce in his inscrutable dealings. True wisdom was therefore to be found in the fear of the Lord, and in a profound veneration for the Almighty, vs. 23—28.

**S**URELY there is a <sup>1</sup> vein for

<sup>1</sup> or, mine.

the silver, and a place for gold where they fine it.

1. *Surely there is a vein for the silver.* Marg., mine. Coverdale renders this, "There are places where silver is molten." Prof. Lee renders it, "There is an outlet for the silver," and supposes it means the coming out or separation of the silver from the earthy particles by which it is surrounded in the ore, not the coming out from the mine. The word rendered *vein* (מִנְיָן) means, properly, a going forth, as the rising of the sun, Ps. xix. 7; the promulgation of an edict, Dan. ix. 25; then a place of going forth—as a gate, door, Ezek. xlii. 11, xliii. 11, and thence a mine, a vein, or a place of the going forth of metals; that is, a place where they are procured. So the LXX here, "Ἔστι γὰρ ἀργυρίῳ τόπος ὅθεν γίνεται"—"there is a place for silver whence it is obtained." The idea here is, that man had evinced his wisdom in finding out the mines of silver and working them. It was one of the instances of his skill that he had been able to penetrate into the earth, and bring out the ore of the precious metals, and convert it to valuable purposes. ¶ *And a place for gold.* A workshop, or laboratory, for working the precious metals. Job says, that even in his time such a laboratory was a proof of the wisdom of man. So now, one of the most striking proofs of skill is to be found in the places where the precious metals are purified, and wrought into the various forms in which they are adapted to ornament and use. ¶ *Where they fine it—מִנְיָן.* The word here used (פָּרַף) means, properly, to bind fast, to fetter; and then to compress, to squeeze through a strainer; and hence to strain, filter; and thence to purify—as wine that is thus filtered, or gold that is

purified. Mal. iii. 3. It may refer here to any process of purifying or refining. It is commonly done by the application of heat. One of the instructive uses of the book of Job is the light which it throws incidentally on the state of the ancient arts and sciences, and the condition of society in reference to the comforts of life at the early period of the world when the author lived. In this passage it is clear (1.) that the metals were then in general use, and (2.) that they were so wrought as to furnish, in the view of Job, a striking illustration of human wisdom and skill. Society was so far advanced as to make use not only of gold and silver, but also of copper and brass. The use of gold and silver commonly precedes the discovery of iron, and consequently the mention of iron in any ancient book indicates a considerably advanced state of society. It is, of course, not known to what extent the art of working metals was carried in the time of Job, as all that would be indicated here would be that the method of obtaining the pure metal from the ore was understood. It may be interesting, however, to observe, that the art was early known to the Egyptians, and was carried by them to a considerable degree of perfection. Pharaoh arrayed Joseph in vestures of fine linen, and put a chain of gold about his neck, Gen. xli. 42, and great quantities of gold and silver ornaments were borrowed by the Israelites of the Egyptians, when they were about to go to the promised land. Gold and silver are mentioned as known in the earliest ages. Comp. Gen. ii. 11, 12, xli. 42; Ex. xx. 23; Gen. xxiii. 15, 16. Iron is also mentioned as having been early known. Gen. iv. 22. Tubal Cain was instructor in iron

2 Iron *is* taken out of the <sup>1</sup><sup>1</sup> or, *dust*.

and brass. Gold and silver mines were early wrought in Egypt, and if Moses was the compiler of the book of Job, it is possible that some of the descriptions here may have been derived from that country, and at all events the mode of working these precious metals was probably the same in Arabia and Egypt. From the mention of ear-rings, bracelets, and jewels of silver and gold, in the days of Abraham, it is evident that the art of metallurgy was known at a very remote period. Workmen are noticed by Homer as excelling in the manufacture of arms, rich vases, and other objects inlaid or ornamented with vessels:

Πηλείδης δ' αἰψ' ἄλλα τίθει ταχυτῆτος ἄεθλα,  
Ἄργύρεον κρητῆρα τετυγμένον.

II. xxiii. 741.

His account of the shield of Achilles (Iliad, xviii. 474) proves that the art of working in the precious metals was well known in his time; and the skill required to delineate the various objects which he describes, was such as no ordinary artisan, even at this time, could be supposed to possess. In Egypt, ornaments of gold and silver, consisting of rings, bracelets, necklaces, and trinkets, have been found in considerable abundance of the times of Osirtasen I., and Thothmes III., the contemporaries of Joseph and of Moses. Diodorus (i. 49) mentions silver mines of Egypt which produced 3,200 myriads of minæ. The gold mines of Egypt remained long unknown, and their position has been ascertained only a few years since by M. Linant and M. Bonomi. They lie in the Bisháree desert, about seventeen days' journey to the south-eastward from Derow. The matrix in which the gold in Egypt was found is quartz, and the excavations to procure the gold are exceedingly deep. The principal excavation is 180 feet deep. The quartz thus obtained was broken by the workmen into small fragments of the size of a bean, and these were passed through hand-mills made of granitic stone, and

earth, and brass *is* molten *out of* the stone.

when reduced to powder the quartz was washed on inclined tables, and the gold was thus separated from the stone. Diodorus says, that the principal persons engaged in mining operations were captives, taken in war, and persons who were compelled to labor in the mines, for offences against the government. They were bound in fetters, and compelled to labor night and day. "No attention," he says, "is paid to these persons; they have not even a piece of rag to cover themselves; and so wretched is their condition, that every one who witnesses it, deplores the excessive misery which they endure. No rest, no intermission from toil, are given either to the sick or the maimed; neither the weakness of age, nor women's infirmities are regarded; all are driven to the work with the lash, till, at last, overcome with the intolerable weight of their afflictions, they die in the midst of their toil." Diodorus adds, "Nature, indeed, I think, teaches that as gold is obtained with immense labor, so it is kept with difficulty, creating great anxiety, and attended in its use both with pleasure and with grief." It was, perhaps, in view of such laborious and difficult operations in obtaining the precious metals, and of the skill which man had evinced in extracting them from the earth, that Job alluded here to the process as a striking proof of human wisdom. On the early use of the metals among the ancient Egyptians, the reader may consult with advantage, Wilkinson's "Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians," vol. iii. p. 215, seq.

2. *Iron*. As has been remarked above, iron was early known, yet probably its common use indicates a more advanced state of civilization than that of gold and silver. The Mexicans were ignorant of the use of iron, though ornaments of gold and silver elegantly wrought abounded among them. Iron is less easily discovered than copper, though more abundant, and is wrought with more difficulty. Among the an-

3 He setteth an end to darkness, and searcheth out all perfec-

tion: the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death.

cient nations, copper was in general use long before iron; and arms, vases, statues, and implements of every kind were made of this metal, alloyed and hardened with tin, before iron came into general use. Tubal Cain is indeed mentioned (Gen. iv. 22) as the "instructor of every artificer in brass and iron," but no direct mention is made of iron arms (Num. xxxv. 16) or tools (Deut. xxvii. 5), until after the departure from Egypt. According to the Arundelian Marbles, iron was known one hundred and eighty-eight years before the Trojan war, about 1370 years B.C.; but Hesiod, Plutarch, and others, limit its discovery to a much later period. Homer, however, distinctly mentions its use, Il. xxiii. 262:—

Ἡδὲ γυναῖκας ἐϋζώνους, πολίον τε σίδηρον.

That by the *sideros* of the poet is meant iron, is clear, from a simile which he uses in the *Odyssey*, derived from the quenching of iron in water, by which he illustrates the hissing produced in the eye of Polyphemus by piercing it with the burning stake:

"And as when armorers temper in the ford  
The keen-edged pole-axe or the shining sword,

The red-hot metal hisses in the lake,  
Thus in the eye-ball hissed the plunging stake." *Odys. ix. 391. POPE.*

Iron is mentioned in the time of Og, king of Bashan, 1450 B.C. It was at first, however, regarded as of great value, and its use was very limited. It was presented in the temples of Greece as among the most valuable offerings, and rings of iron have been found in the tombs of Egypt that had been worn as ornaments, showing the value of the metal. One of the reasons why this metal comes so slowly into use, and why it was so rare in early times, was the difficulty of smelting the ore, and reducing it to a malleable state. "Its gross and stubborn ore," says Dr. Robertson (*America. B. iv.*), "must feel twice the force of fire, and go through two laborious processes, before it becomes fit for use."

It was this fact which made it to Job such a proof of the wisdom of man that he had invented the process of making iron, or of separating it from the earthy portions in which it is found.

¶ Is taken out of the earth. *Marg., dust.* The form in which iron is found is too well known to need description. It is seldom, if ever, found in its purity, and the ore generally has so much the appearance of mere earth, that it requires some skill to distinguish it.

¶ And brass. *πράσις.* Brass is early and frequently mentioned in the Bible (Gen. iv. 22; Ex. xxv. 3, xxvi. 11, *et al.*), but there is little doubt that copper is meant in these places. Brass is a compound metal, made of copper and zinc—containing usually about one-third of the weight in zinc—and it is hardly probable that the art of compounding this was early known. *Comp. Notes on ch. xx. 24.* Dr. Good renders this, "And the rock poureth forth copper." Coverdale, "The stones resolved to metal." Noyes, "The stone is melted into copper." Prof. Lee, "Also the stone [is taken from the earth] from which one fuseth copper." The Hebrew is, literally, "And stone is poured out (*פָּרַץ*) copper." The LXX render it, "And brass is cut like stones;" that is, is cut from the quarry.

The word *stone* here in the Hebrew means, doubtless, *ore* in the form of stone; and the fact here mentioned, that such ore is fused into the *πράσις*, *nēhhūshā*, is clear proof that copper is intended. Brass is never found in ore, and is never compounded in the earth. A similar idea is found in Pliny, who probably uses the word *aes* to denote copper, as it is commonly employed in the ancient writings. *Aes fit e lapide aeroso, quem vocant Cadmiam; et igne lapides in aes solvuntur. Nat. Hist. xxxiv. i. 22.* On the general subject of ancient metallurgy, see Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, vol. iii. ch. ix.

3. He setteth an end to darkness.

4 The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant; *even the waters* forgotten of the foot: they are

That is, man does. The reference here is undoubtedly to the operations of mining, and the idea is, that man delves into the darkest regions; he goes even to the outer limits of darkness; he penetrates everywhere. Probably the allusion is derived from the custom of carrying torches into mines. ¶ *And searcheth out all perfection.* Makes a complete search; examines everything; carries the matter to the utmost. The idea is not that he searches out all perfection—as our translation would seem to convey; but that he makes a complete and thorough search—and yet after all he does not come to the true and highest wisdom. ¶ *The stones of darkness.* The last stone, says Herder, in the mining investigations in the time of Job; the corner or boundary stone, as it were, of the kingdom of darkness and night. Prof. Lee supposes that there is allusion here to the fact that stones were used as *weights*, and that the idea is, that man had ascertained the *exact weight* of the gross darkness, that is, had taken an accurate admeasurement of it, or had wholly investigated it. But this solution seems far-fetched. Schultens supposes the centre of the earth to be denoted by this expression. But it seems to me that the words “stone” and “darkness” are to be separated, and that the one is not used to qualify the other. The sense is, that man searches out everything; he perfectly and accurately penetrates everywhere, and examines all objects;—*the stone* (אֶבֶן), that is, the rocks, the mines; *the darkness* (חֹשֶׁךְ), that is, the darkness of the cavern, the interior of the earth; and *the shadow of death* (צֵל מוֹת), that is, the most dark and impenetrable regions of the earth. So it is rendered by Coverdale: “The stones, the dark, and the horrible shadow.”

4. *The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant.* It would be difficult to tell what idea our translators affixed to this

dried up, they are gone away from men.

sentence, though it seems to be a literal version of the Hebrew. There has been a great variety of rendering given to the passage. Noyes translates it:

“From the place where they dwell they open a shaft,  
Unsupported by the feet,  
They are suspended, they swing away from men.”

Herder:

“A flood goeth out from the realm of oblivion,  
They draw it up from the foot of the mountain,  
They remove it away from men.”

According to this, the meaning, Herder says, would be, that “the dwelling of the forgotten would be the kingdom of the dead, and at greater depth than the deepest mines have reached. Streams break forth from the river of eternal oblivion beneath, and yet are overcome by the miners, pumped dry, and turned out of the way. Yet I confess,” says he, “the passage remains obscure to my mind.” Coverdale renders it, “With the river of water parteth he asunder the strange people, that knoweth no good neighbourhood; such as are rude, unmannerly, and boisterous.” The LXX render it, “The channels of brooks are choked up with sand; when to such as know not the right way strength is unavailing, and they are removed from among men.” The difficulty of interpreting the passage has been felt by every expositor to be great; and there are scarcely two expositions alike. There can be no doubt that Job refers to mining operations, and the whole passage should be explained with reference to such works. But the obscurity may possibly arise from the fact that mining operations were then conducted in a manner different from what they are now, and the allusion may be to some custom which was then well understood, but of which we now know nothing. A plausible interpretation, at least, has been furnished by Gesenius, and one which seems to me to be more

5 *As for the earth, out of it cometh bread; and under it is turned up as it were fire.*

satisfactory than any other. An explanation of the words in the passage will bring out this view. The word rendered "breaketh out" (יָצָא), means to break, rend, tear through—and here refers to the act of breaking through the earth for the purpose of sinking a shaft or pit in a mine. The word rendered "flood" (נָחַל) means, properly, a stream or brook; then a valley in which a brook runs along; and here Gesenius supposes it means a shaft or pit of a mine. It may be called a נָחַל, *nāhhāl*, or valley, from the resemblance to a *gully* which the water has washed away by a mountain torrent.

¶ *From the inhabitant.* This conveys evidently no idea as it now stands. The Hebrew is יָשָׁב. The word יָשָׁב, from which יָ is derived, means to sojourn for a time, to dwell, as a stranger or guest; and the phrase here means, "away from any dweller or inhabitant;" that is, from where men dwell, or from the surface of the ground as the abode of men; that is, under ground. Or the idea is, that it is done where no one could dwell. It could not be the abode of man. ¶ *Even the waters forgotten of the foot.* The words "even the waters" are supplied by the translators. The Hebrew is וְהַמַּיִם שִׁכְחָה לְרַגְלָא, and refers to being *unsupported* by the foot. They go into a place where the foot yields no support, and they are obliged to suspend themselves in order to be sustained. ¶ *They are dried up*—יָבֵשׁ. The word יָבֵשׁ, from which this is derived, means to hang down, to be pendulous, as boughs are on a tree, or as a bucket is in a well. According to this interpretation, the meaning is, that they *hang down* far from men in their mines, and swing to and fro like the branches of a tree in the wind. ¶ *They are gone away from men.* The word יָצָא, from יָצָא, means to move to and fro, to waver, to vacillate. Gr. and Latin *veio*, *nuo*, Germ.

*nicken*, to nod backwards and forwards. The sense here is, that, far from the dwellings of men, they *wave to and fro* in their deep mines, suspended by cords. They descend by the aid of cords, and not by a firm foothold, until they penetrate the deep darkness of the earth. Other interpretations may be seen, however, defended at length in Schultens, and in Rosenmüller—who has adopted substantially that of Schultens—in Dr. Good, and in other commentaries. Few passages in the Bible are more obscure.

5. *As for the earth, out of it cometh bread.* That is, it produces food, or the materials for bread. The idea of Job seems to be, that it was proof of great wisdom and skill on the part of man that he had carried the arts of agriculture so far. The earth in producing grain, and the arts of husbandry, were illustrative of wisdom and skill, but they did not impart the wisdom about the government of God which was desired. That was reserved to be imparted more directly by God himself, vs. 23, seq. ¶ *And under it is turned up as it were fire.* That is, on being turned up it discloses precious stones that seem to glow like coals of fire. This is the obvious sense of this passage, though a different interpretation has been given by most expositors. Job is speaking of mining. He describes the search for gold, and silver, and precious stones. He says that one of the wonders of wisdom in the earth is, that it produces nutritious grain; another, that when the same earth is turned up it seems to rest on a bed of fire. The dark ground is made to glow by the quantity of jewels that are disclosed, and its deep recesses seem to be on fire. There is no reference here, therefore, as it seems to me, to any volcanic agency, or to any belief that the earth rests on a sea of fire. The idea has been expressed in Sergeant's "Mine:"

"Wheresoe'er our footsteps turn,  
Rubies blush and diamonds burn."

Luther has given to the passage a dif-

6 The stones of it *are* the place of sapphires: and it hath <sup>1</sup> dust of gold.

7 *There* <sup>2</sup> is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen:

<sup>1</sup> or, gold ore.

a c. 11. 6.

ferent sense. Man bringet auch Feuer unten aus der Erde, da oben Speise auf wachst—"They bring fire from the earth beneath, where food grows up above." Coverdale, "He bringeth food out of the earth; that which is under he consumeth with fire." Herder, "And underneath it is changed as by fire." Dr. Good, "Below it [the earth] windeth a fiery region."

6. *The stones of it are the place.* Among the stones of the earth sapphires are found. "The situation of the sapphire is in alluvial soil, in the vicinity of rocks belonging to the secondary floetz trap formation, and imbedded in gneiss."—*Jameson*. "The sapphire occurs in considerable abundance in the granitic alluvion of Matura and Saffragam, in Ceylon."—*Davy*. ¶ *Sapphires*. Comp. Note Isa. liv. 11. The sapphire is a precious stone, usually of a blue color, though it is sometimes yellow, red, violet, green, or white. In hardness it is inferior to the diamond only:

"In unroll'd tufts, flowers purpled, blue and white,

Like sapphire, pearl, in rich embroidery."

SHAKESPEARE.

"He tinctures rubies with their rosy hue,  
And on the sapphire spreads a heavenly blue."

BLACKMORE.

The mineral is, next to the diamond, the most valuable of the precious stones. The most highly prized varieties are the crimson and carmine red: these are the *Oriental ruby* of the traveller, and next to the diamond are the most valuable jewels hitherto discovered. The blue varieties—the sapphire of the jeweller—are next in value to the red. The yellow varieties—the *Oriental Topaz* of the jeweller—are of less value than the blue or true sapphire. *Edin. Ency. Art. Mineralogy*. ¶ *And it hath dust of gold*. Marg., or, gold ore. Literally, "The dusts of gold are in it." Gold is

8 The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.

9 He putteth forth his hand upon the rock; <sup>2</sup> he overturneth the mountains by the roots.

<sup>2</sup> or, *slint*.

often found in the form of dust. It is obtained by washing it from the sand, and passing it over a fleece of wool, to which the gold adheres.

7. *There is a path which no fowl knoweth.* That is, a path in searching for gold and precious stones. The miner treads a way which is unseen by the bird of keenest vision. He penetrates into the deep darkness of the earth. The object of Job is to show the wisdom and the intrepidity of man in penetrating these dark regions in searching for sapphires and gold. The most far-sighted birds could not find their way to them. The most intrepid and fearless beasts of prey dared not adventure to those dangerous regions. The word rendered *fowl* (טוֹף) means either a ravenous beast, Jer. xii. 9, or more commonly, a ravenous bird. See Notes on Isa. xlvii. 11. According to Bochart, Hieroz. P. 11. l. 11. c. viii. p. 195, the word here denotes a rapacious bird of any kind; a bird which has a keen vision. ¶ *Which the vulture's eye hath not seen.* The vulture is distinguished for the remarkable keenness of its vision. On the deserts of Arabia, it is said, when a camel dies, there is almost immediately discerned far in the distant sky, what seems at first to be a mere speck. As it draws nearer it is perceived to be a vulture that had marked the camel as he fell, and that comes to prey upon it. This bird is proverbial for the keenness of its sight.

8. *The lion's whelps.* The lion, that ventures into the most dangerous places in pursuit of prey, has not dared to go where man has gone in pursuit of precious stones and gold. On the words here used to designate the lion, see Bochart Hieroz. P. 1. Lib. iii. c. 1.

9. *He putteth forth his hand.* That is, the miner, in securing the precious



10 He <sup>b</sup> cutteth out rivers among the rocks; and his eye seeth every precious thing.

<sup>b</sup> Hab. 3. 9.

metals and gems. ¶ *Upon the rock.* Marg. *flint.* The word here used (אֶפְסָרִית) occurs also in Ps. cxiv. 8. Deut. viii. 15, xxxii. 13. It means *flint, silex*; and the idea is, that the miner approaches the hardest substances. He penetrates even the flint, in searching for precious stones. Dr. Good renders it, "Sparry ore." Michaelis renders the same word in Deut. vii. 15, porphyry, or red granite. The idea is, that nothing, however difficult, not even cutting down the hardest rocks, deters the miner from pursuing his work. ¶ *He overturneth the mountains by the roots.* That is, he digs under them, and they fall. The *root* of a mountain means its base or foundation. The following passage from Pliny (Hist. Nat. xxxiii. c. iv. § 21) furnishes an admirable illustration of this passage: Tamen in silice facillior existimatur labor. Est namque terra ex quodam argillæ genere glareæ mixta. Candidam vocant, prope inexpugnabilis. Cuneis eam ferreis agrediuntur, et iisdem malleis; nihilque durius putant, nisi quod inter omnia auri fames durissima est. Peracto opere cervices fornicum ab ultimo cædunt, dantque signum ruinæ eamque solus intelligit in cacumine montis pervigil. Hic voce ictuque repente operarios revocari jubet, pariterque ipse devolat. Mons fractus cadit in sese longo fragore, qui concipi humana mente non possit, et flatu incredibili. Spectant victores ruinam nature.

10. *He cutteth out rivers among the rocks.* That is, in his operations of mining, he cuts channels for the water to flow off through the rocks. This was done, as it is now, for the purpose of drawing off the water that accumulates in mines. ¶ *His eye seeth every precious thing.* Every valuable mineral or precious stone that lies imbedded in the rocks. It is evident from this, that mining operations were carried to a

11 He bindeth <sup>c</sup> the floods from <sup>1</sup> overflowing; and *the thing that is hid* bringeth he forth to light.

<sup>c c.</sup> 26. 8.

<sup>1</sup> weeping.

considerable extent in the time of Job. The art of thus penetrating the earth, and laying open its secret treasures, indicates an advanced stage of society—a stage much removed from barbarism.

11. *He bindeth the floods from overflowing.* Marg. *weeping.* The Hebrew also is 'from weeping' מִבְּכָה; referring to the water which trickles down the shaft of the mine. The idea is, that even the large streams which break out in such mines, the fountains and springs which the miner encounters in his operations, he so effectually restrains that they do not even trickle down or *weep* on the sides of the shaft, but it is left perfectly dry. This is necessary in opening mines of coal or minerals, and in making tunnels or other excavations. Yet any one who has passed into a coal mine, through a tunnel, or into any one of the deep natural caves of the earth, will see how difficult it is to close all the places where water would trickle down. It is in fact seldom done; and if done literally in the time of Job, it indicates a very advanced state of the art of mining. In sinking a shaft, it is often necessary to pass at different depths through strata of earth where the water oozes out in abundance, and where the operations would be necessarily suspended if it could not be stopped or drawn off. The machinery necessary for this constitutes a considerable part of the expense of mining operations. ¶ *And the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light.* The concealed treasures; the gold and gems that are buried deep in the earth. He brings them out of their darkness, and converts them to ornament and to use. This ends the description which Job gives of the operations of mining in his time. We may remark, in regard to this description, (1.) that the illustration was admirably chosen. His object was to show that true wisdom was not to be

12 But where <sup>d</sup> shall wisdom

*d* Ec. 7. 24.

found by human science, or by mere investigation. He selects a case, therefore, where man had shown the most skill and wisdom, and where he had penetrated farthest into darkness. He penetrated the earth; drove his shaft through rocks; closed up gushing fountains, and laid bare the treasures that had been buried for generations in the regions of night. Yet all this did not enable him fully to explain the operations of the divine government. (2.) The art of mining was carried to a considerable degree of perfection in the time of Job. This is shown by the fact that his description would apply very well to that art even as it is now practised. Substantially the same things were done then which are done now, though we cannot suppose with the same skill, or to the same extent, or with the same perfection of machinery. (3.) The time when Job lived was in a somewhat advanced period of society. The art of working metals to any considerable extent indicates such an advance. It is not found among barbarous tribes; and even where the art is to a considerable extent known, it is long before men learn to sink shafts in the earth, or to penetrate rocks, or to draw off water from mines. (4.) We see the wisdom and goodness which God has shown in regard to the things that are most useful to man. Those things which are *necessary* to his being, or which are very desirable for his comfort, are easily accessible; those which are less necessary, or whose use is dangerous, are placed in deep, dark, and almost inaccessible places. The fruits of the earth are near to man; water flows everywhere, and it is rare that he has to dig deep for it; and when found by digging, it is a running fountain, not soon exhausted, like a mine of gold; and iron, also, the most valuable of the metals, is usually placed near the surface of the earth. But the pearl is at the bottom of the ocean; diamonds and other precious stones are in remote regions, or imbedded in rocks;

be found? and where is the place of understanding?

silver runs along in small veins, often in the fissures of rocks, and extending far into the bowels of the earth. The *design* of placing the precious metals in these almost inaccessible fissures of the rocks it is not difficult to understand. Had they been easily accessible, and limited in their quantity, they would long since have been exhausted — causing at one time a *glut* in the market, and at others absolute want. As they are now, they exercise the utmost ingenuity of man, first to *find* them, and then to *procure* them; they are distributed in small quantities, so that their value is always great; they furnish a convenient circulating medium in all countries; they afford all that is needful for ornament. (5.) There is another proof of wisdom, in regard to their arrangement in the earth, which was probably unknown in the time of Job. It is the fact that the most useful of the metals are found in immediate connexion with the fuel required for their reduction, and the limestone which facilitates that reduction. This is now perfectly understood by mineralogists, and it is an instance of the goodness of God, and of the wisdom of his arrangements, which ought not to be disregarded or overlooked. They who wish to examine this subject more at length, may find some admirable views in Buckland's *Geology and Mineralogy* (Bridge-water Treatises), vol. i. pp. 392—415.

12. *But where shall wisdom be found?* That is, the full understanding of the plans of God—for this is the point of inquiry. The object of Job is to show that it is not to be found in the most profound science; by penetrating to the farthest extent of which man was capable in the earth, nor by any human investigations whatever. None of these things revealed the great plans of the Almighty in reference to his moral government, and particularly to the points which engrossed the attention of Job and his friends. Where true wisdom is to be found he proceeds to state in the subsequent verses.

13 Man knoweth not the price  
• thereof; neither is it found in  
the land of the living.

14 The depth saith, It is not  
in me: and the sea saith, It is

c Pr. 3. 13—15.

13. *Man knoweth not the price thereof.* The word rendered *price* (מַחְוֶה) means properly that which is set in a pile or row, or which is arranged in order. Here it means preparation, equipment—that is, anything put in order, or ready. Judges xvii. 10. It is also used in the sense of estimation or valuation, Lev. v. 15, 18, 25. The word *price* here, however, seems to form no proper answer to the question in the previous verse, as the question is, *where* wisdom is to be found, not what is its *value*. Many expositors have therefore introduced a different idea in their interpretation. Dr. Good renders it, “Man knoweth not its *source*.” Prof. Lee, “Man knoweth not its *equal*.” Herder, “Man knoweth not the *seat* thereof.” Coverdale, “No man can tell how *worthy* a thing she is.” The LXX render it, “Man knoweth not—ὁδὸν αὐτῆς—her way.” But the word here used is not employed to denote a *place* or *way*; and the true interpretation doubtless is, that Job does not confine himself to a strict answer of the question proposed in ver. 12, but goes on to say that man could not *buy* it; he could neither find it, nor had he the means of purchasing it with all the wealth of which he was the owner. ¶ *Neither is it found in the land of the living.* That is, it is not found among men. We must look to a higher source than man for true wisdom. Comp. Isa. xxxviii. 11, liii. 8.

14. *The depth saith.* This is a beautiful personification. The object of this verse and the following is, to show that wisdom cannot be found in the deepest recesses to which man can penetrate, nor purchased by anything which man possesses. It must come from God only. The word *depth* here (תְּהוֹמֹת) means properly a wave, billow, surge; then a mass of waters, a flood, or the deep ocean, Deut. viii. 7; Gen. vii. 11; Ps.

not with me.

15 It <sup>1</sup> cannot be gotten for gold, <sup>f</sup> neither shall silver be weighed *for* the price thereof.

<sup>1</sup> *fine gold shall not be given for it.*

<sup>f</sup> Pr. 8. 11, 19. 16. 16.

xxxvi. 7; and then a gulf, or abyss. It refers here to the sea, or ocean; and the idea is, that its vast depths might be sounded, and true wisdom would not be found there.

15. *It cannot be gotten for gold.* Marg., *fine gold shall not be given for it.* The word which is here rendered *gold*, and in the margin *fine gold*, (זָהָב טָהוֹר) is not the common word used to denote this metal. It is derived from קָרַע, to *shut*, to *close*, and means properly that which is *shut up* or *enclosed*; and hence Gesenius supposes it means pure gold, or the most precious gold, as that which is shut up or enclosed with care. Dr. Good renders it “solid gold,” supposing it means that which is condensed, or beaten. The phrase occurs in nearly the same form (זָהָב טָהוֹר, “gold shut up,” Marg.) in 1 Kings vi. 20, 21, vii. 49, 50, x. 21; 2 Chron. iv. 21, 22, ix. 20; and undoubtedly denotes there the most precious kind of gold. Its relation to the sense of the verb *to shut up* is not certain. Prof. Lee supposes that the idea is derived from the use of the word, and of similar words in Arabic, where the idea of heating, fusing, giving another color, changing the shape, and thence of fixing, retaining, &c., is found; and that the idea here is that of fused or purified gold. Michaelis supposes that it refers to *native* gold that is pure and unadulterated, or the form of gold called *dendroides*, from its shooting out in the form of a tree—*baumartig gewachsenes Gold* (from the Arabic شجر, a tree.) It is not known, however, that the Hebrew word קָרַע was ever used to denote a tree. There can be no doubt that the word denotes *gold* of a pure kind, and it *may* have been given to it because gold of that kind was carefully *shut up* in places of safe

16 It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire.

17 The gold and the crystal cannot equal it : and the exchange

of it shall not be for jewels <sup>1</sup> of fine gold.

18 No mention shall be made of <sup>2</sup> coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies.

<sup>1</sup> or, vessels.

<sup>2</sup> or, Ramoth.

keeping; but it would seem more probable to me that it was given to it for some reason now unknown. Of many of the names now given by us to objects which are significant, and which are easily understood by us, it would be impossible to trace the reason or propriety, after the lapse of four thousand years. ¶ *Neither shall silver be weighed.* That is, it would be impossible to weigh out so much silver as to equal its value. Before the art of coining was known, it was common to weigh the precious metals that were used as a medium of trade. Comp. Gen. xxiii. 16.

16. *The gold of Ophir.* Uniformly spoken of as the most precious gold. See Notes on ch. xxii. 24. ¶ *With the precious onyx.* The onyx is a semi-pellucid gem, with variously colored veins or zones. It is a variety of the chalcedony. The Arabic word denotes that which was of two colors, where the white predominated. The Greeks gave the name *onyx* (ὄνυξ) to the gem from its resemblance to the color of the thumb-nail. See Passow. ¶ *Or the sapphire.* Notes on ver. 6.

17. *The gold and the crystal.* A crystal, in chemistry, is an inorganic body which, by the operation of affinity, has assumed the form of a regular solid, terminated by a number of plane and smooth surfaces. It is found in various forms and sizes, and is composed of a great variety of substances. The common *rock crystal* is a general name for all the transparent crystals of quartz, particularly of limpid or colorless quartz. Webster. The word here used (זָכָה) occurs nowhere else in the Bible. It is from זָכָה, to be clean, pure; and is given to the crystal on account of its transparency. In Arabic the word means either glass or crystal. Jerome translates it *vitrum*—glass; the

LXX, ὕαλος—crystal, or the *lapis crystallinus*. Hesychius says that the crystal denotes λαμπρὸν κρύος—clear ice, or λίθον τίμιον—a precious stone. There is no reason to suppose that glass was known so early as this, and the probability is, that the word here denotes something like the rock crystal, having a strong resemblance to the diamond, and perhaps then regarded as nearly of equal value. It cannot be supposed that the relative value of gems was then understood as it is now. ¶ *Jewels of fine gold.* Marg. vessels. The Hebrew word כֵּל properly means vessels, or instruments. It may refer here, however, to ornaments for the person, as it was in that way chiefly that gold was employed.

18. *No mention shall be made of coral.* That is, as a price by which to purchase wisdom, or in comparison with wisdom. The margin here is, *Ramoth*—retaining the Hebrew word רָמוֹת. Jerome renders it, *excelsa*—exalted or valuable things. So the LXX, *Μετέωρα*—exalted or sublime things; as if the word were from מָרָא, to be exalted.

According to the Rabbins, the word here means *red coral*. It occurs also in Ezek. xxvii. 16, where it is mentioned as a valuable commodity in merchandise in which Syria traded with Tyre, and occurs in connexion with emeralds, purple, brodered work, fine linen, and agate. The coral is a well known marine substance, not valued now as if it were a precious stone, but probably in the time of Job regarded as of value sufficient to be reckoned with gems. It was not rare, though its uses were not known. As a beautiful object, it might at that time deserve to be mentioned in connexion with pearls. It is now found in abundance in the Red Sea, and probably that which was known to Job was obtained there.

19 The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be

Shaw says, "In rowing gently over it [the port *Tor*], while the surface of the sea was calm, such a diversity of *Madrepores*, *Fucuses*, and other marine vegetables, presented themselves to the eye, that we could not forbear taking them, as Pliny [L. xiii. cap. 25] had done before us, for a forest under water. The branched *Madrepores* particularly contributed very much to authorize the comparison; for we passed over several that were eight or ten feet high, growing sometimes pyramidal, like the cypress, and at other times had their branches more open and diffused, like the oak; not to speak of others which, like the creeping plants, spread themselves over the bottom of the sea." *Travels*. p. 384, Ed. Oxford, 1738. It should be added, however, that there is no absolute certainty that Job referred here to coral. The Hebrew word would suggest simply that which was *exalted in value*, or of great price; and it is not easy to determine to what particular substance Job meant to apply it. ¶ *Or of pearls.* גָּבִישׁ—*Gabish*. This word occurs nowhere else, though אֶלְגָּבִישׁ—*Elgabish*, is found in Ezek. xiii. 11, 13, xxxviii. 22, where it means hail-stones, or pieces of ice. Perhaps the word here means merely *crystal*—resembling ice. So Umbreit, Gesenius, and others, understand it. Prof. Lee supposes that the word here used denotes that which is *aggregated*, and then what is *massive*, or *vast*. See his Note on this place. Jerome renders it, *eminentia*—exalted, lofty things; the LXX retain the word without attempting to translate it—γαβίς—and the fact that they have not endeavored to render it, is a strong circumstance to show that it is now hopeless to attempt to determine its meaning. ¶ *Above rubies.* The ruby is a precious stone, of a carmine red color, sometimes verging to violet. There are two kinds of rubies, the Oriental or corundum, and the spinelle. The ruby is next in hardness to the diamond, and approaches it in value. The Oriental ruby is the

valued with pure gold.

same as the sapphire. The ruby is found in the kingdom of Pegu, in the Mysore country, in Ceylon, and in some other places, and is usually imbedded in gneiss. It is by no means certain, however, that the word here used (רִבְיָהּ) means rubies. Many of the Rabbins suppose that *pearls* are meant by it; and so Bochart, Hieroz. ii. Lib. v. c. 6, 7, understands it. J. D. Michaelis understands it to mean *red corals*, and Gesenius concurs with this opinion. Umbreit renders it, *Perlen*—pearls. The word occurs in Prov. iii. 15, viii. 11, xx. 15, xxxi. 10. Lam. iv. 7. In the Proverbs, as here, it is used in comparison with *wisdom*, and undoubtedly denotes one of the precious gems.

19. The topaz. The topaz is a precious stone, whose colors are yellow, green, blue, and red. Its natural place is in various primitive rocks, such as the topaz-rock, gneiss, and clay-slate. It is found in the granite and gneiss districts of Mar and Cairngorm, in Cornwall, in Brazil, and in various other places. The most valuable stones of this kind now known are those which are found in Brazil. This gem is much prized by jewellers, and is considered as one of the more beautiful ornamental stones. The Hebrew word פִּתְדָּא, *pitdā*, occurs in Ex. xxviii. 17, xxxix. 10; Ezek. xxviii. 13, and in this place only. It is uniformly rendered *topaz*. It is not improbable that the English word *topaz*, and the Greek *τοπάzion*, are derived from this, by a slight transposition of the letters—פִּתְדָּא. The Vulgate and the LXX render this *topaz*. ¶ *Of Ethiopia.* Heb. כוּשׁ—*Cush*. Coverdale here renders it, *India*. On the meaning of this word, and the region denoted by it, see Notes on Isa. xi. 11. It may mean either the part of Africa now known as Ethiopia, or Abyssinia and Nubia; the southern part of Arabia, or the Oriental Cush in the vicinity of the Tigris. It is better, since the word has such ambiguity, to retain the original, and to

20 Whence <sup>s</sup> then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?

21 Seeing it is hid from the

g ver. 12. Ja. 1. 5, 17.

translate it *Cush*. For anything that appears, this may have denoted, in the time of Job, the southern part of Arabia. It is known that the topaz was found there. Thus Pliny says, Lib. xxxvii. 32, Reperta est—in Arabiæ insula, quæ Citis vocatur; in qua Troglodytæ prædones, diutius fame—pressi cum herbas radicesque effoderent, eruerunt topazion.

20. *Whence then cometh wisdom?* This question is now repeated from ver. 12, in order to give it greater emphasis. It is designed to fix the attention on the inquiry as one which found no solution in the discoveries of science, and whose solution was hidden from the most penetrating human intellect.

21. *It is hid from the eyes of all living.* That is, of all men, and of all animals. Man has not found it by the most sagacious of all his discoveries, and the keenest vision of beasts and fowls has not traced it out. ¶ *And kept close.* Heb. *concealed*. ¶ *From the fowls of the air.* Comp. Notes on ver. 7. Umbreit remarks, on this passage, that there is attributed to the fowls in Oriental countries a deep knowledge, and an extraordinary gift of divination, and that they appear as the interpreters and confidants of the gods. One cannot but reflect, says he, on the personification of the good spirit of Ormuzd through the fowls, according to the doctrine of the Persians, (Comp. Creutzer's Symbolik Th. 1. s. 723;) upon the ancient fowl-king (Vogelkönig), Simurg, upon the mountain Kap, representing the highest wisdom of life; upon the discourses of the fowls of the great mystic poet of the Persians, Ferideddin Attar, &c. Among the ancient Greeks and Romans, also, a considerable part of their divinations consisted in observing the flight of birds, as if they were endowed with intelligence, and indicated coming events by the course which they took. Comp. also, Eccles. x. 20, where wis-

dom or intelligence is ascribed to the birds of the air. "Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bed-chamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter."

22 Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.

<sup>1</sup> or, heaven.

dom or intelligence is ascribed to the birds of the air. "Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bed-chamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter."

22. *Destruction.* This is a personification which is exceedingly sublime. Job had spoken of the wonderful discoveries made by science, but none of them had disclosed true wisdom. It had not been discovered in the shaft which the miner sank deep in the earth; in the hidden regions which he laid open to day, nor by the birds that saw to the farthest distance, or that were regarded as the interpreters of the will of the gods. It was natural to ask whether it might not have been discovered in the vast profound of the nether world—the regions of death and of night; and whether by making a bold appeal to the king that reigned there, a response might not be heard that would be more satisfactory. In ver. 14, the appeal had been made to the sea—with all its vast stores; here the appeal is to far deeper regions—to the nether world of darkness and of death. On the word used here (מְרוֹד), *destruction*, see Notes on ch. xxvi. 6. It is employed here, as in that place, to denote the nether world—the abode of departed spirits—the world where those are who have been *destroyed* by death, and to which the destruction of the grave is the entrance. ¶ *And death.* Death is used here to denote *Sheol*, or the abode of the spirits of the dead. The sense is, that those deep and dark regions had simply heard the distant report of wisdom but they did not understand it, and that if one went down there it would not be fully revealed to him. Perhaps there is an allusion to the natural expectation that, if one could go down and converse with the dead, he could find out much more

23 God <sup>b</sup> understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.

24 For he <sup>c</sup> looketh to the

<sup>a</sup> Pr. 2. 6.

<sup>d</sup> Pr. 15. 3.

than can be known on earth. It was to be presumed that they would understand much more about the unseen and future world, and about the plans and government of God, than man can know here. It was on this belief, and on the hope that some league or alliance could be made with the dead, inducing them to communicate what they knew, that the science of necromancy was founded. See Notes on Isa. viii. 19. ¶ *We have heard the fame thereof.* We have heard the report of it, or a rumor of it. The meaning is, that they did not understand it fully, and that if man could penetrate to those dark regions, he could not get the information which he desired. Wisdom is still at such an immense distance, that it is only a *report*, or rumor of it, which has reached us.

23. *God understandeth the way thereof.* These are doubtless the words of Job. The meaning is, that the reason of the divine dispensations could be known only to God himself. He had given no *clew* by which man could discover this. He might carry his investigations far into the regions of science; he could penetrate the earth, and look on the stars, but still all his investigations fell short of disclosing the reasons of the divine dispensations. The secret was lodged in his bosom, and he only could communicate where and when he pleased. It may be added here, that this is as true now as it was in the time of Job. Man has carried the investigations of science almost infinitely farther than he had then, but still by the investigations of science he has by no means superseded the necessity of revelation, or shed light on the great questions that have, in all ages, so much perplexed the race. It is only by direct communication, by his word and by his Spirit, that man can be made to under-

ends of the earth, *and* seeth under the whole heaven;

25 To make <sup>k</sup> the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure.

<sup>k</sup> Ps. 135. 7.

stand the reason of the divine doings, and nothing is better established by the course of events than the truth on which Job here so much insists, that *science* cannot answer the questions of so much interest to man about the divine government.

24. *For he looketh to the ends of the earth.* That is, God sees and knows everything. He looks upon the whole universe. Man sees objects dimly; he sees but a few, and he little understands the bearing of one thing or another.

25. *To make the weight for the winds.* That is, to weigh the winds, and to measure the waters—things that it would seem most difficult to do. The idea here seems to be, that God had made all things by measure and by rule. Even the winds—so fleeting and imponderable—he had adjusted and balanced in the most exact manner, as if he had *weighed* them when he made them. The air has *weight*, but it is not probable that this fact was known in the time of Job, or that he adverted to it here. It is rather the idea, suggested above, that the God who had formed everything by exact rule, and who had power to govern the winds in the most exact manner, must be qualified to impart wisdom. ¶ *And he weigheth the waters.* Comp. Notes on Isa. xl. 12. seq. The word rendered *weigheth* in this place (שָׁקָל) means either to *weigh*, or to *measure*, Isa. xl. 12. As the “measure” here is mentioned, it rather means probably to adjust, to apportion, than to weigh. The waters are dealt out by measure; the winds are weighed. The sense is, that though the waters of the ocean are so vast, yet God has adjusted them all with infinite skill, as if he had dealt them out by measure; and having done this, he is qualified to explain to man the reason of his doings.

26 When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder :

26. *When he made a decree for the rain.* A statute or law (פֶּקֶד) by which the rain is regulated. It is not sent by chance or hap-hazard. It is under the operation of regular and settled laws. We cannot suppose that those laws were understood in the time of Job, but the *fact* might be understood that the rain *was* regulated by laws, and that fact would show that God was qualified to impart wisdom. His kingdom was a kingdom of settled law, and not of chance or caprice, and if the rain was regulated by statute, it was fair to presume that he did not deal with his people by chance, and that afflictions were not sent without rule. Comp. Notes on ch. v. 6. ¶ *And a way.* A path through which the rapid lightning should pass—referring, perhaps, to the apparent *opening* in the clouds in which the lightning seems to move along. ¶ *The lightning of the thunder.* The word lightning here (רָאָז—hhâziz) properly means *an arrow*, from רָאָז, obsol., to pierce through, to transfix, to perforate; and hence the lightning—from the rapidity with which it passes—like an arrow. The word “thunder” (רָעַד) means *voices*, and hence *thunder*, as being by way of eminence the voice of God. Comp. Ps. xxix. 3-5. The whole expression here means “the thunder-flash.” Coverdale renders this, “when he gave the mighty floods a law;” but it undoubtedly refers to the thunder-storm, and the idea is, that he who controls the rapid lightning, regulating its laws and directing its path through the heavens, is qualified to communicate truth to men, and can explain the great principles on which his government is administered.

27. *Then did he see it.* That is, then did he see wisdom. When in the work of creation he gave laws to the rain and the thunder-storm; when he weighed out the winds and measured out the

27 Then did he see it, and <sup>1</sup> declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out.

<sup>1</sup> or, number.

waters, then he saw and understood the principles of true wisdom. There is a remarkable similarity between the expression here and Prov. viii. 27—30, “When he prepared the heavens, I [wisdom] was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the depth; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the foundations of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth; then I was by him as one brought up with him; I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.” ¶ *And declare it.* Marg. number. The word (רָעַד) means, however, rather to *declare*, or to *narrate*; and the idea is, that even then he made known to intelligent beings the true principles of wisdom, as consisting in the fear of the Lord, and in suitable veneration for the Most High. *In what way* this was made known, Job does not say; but there can be no doubt of the fact to which he adverts, that even in his time the great principles of all real wisdom were made known to created intelligences, as consisting in profound veneration of God, in a willingness to bow under his dispensations, and to confide in him. ¶ *He prepared it.* Made it a matter of *thought* and *inquiry* to find out what was real wisdom, and communicated it in a proper way to his creatures. The idea is, that it was not the result of chance, nor did it spring up of its own accord, but it was a matter of *intelligent investigation* on the part of God to know what constituted true wisdom. Probably, also, Job here means to refer to the attempts of *man* to investigate it, and to say that its value was enhanced from the fact that it had even required the *search of God* to find it out. Beautiful eulogiums of Wisdom may be seen in the Apocryphal book Ecclesiasticus, of which the following is a specimen:



28 And unto man he said,  
Behold, the fear <sup>1</sup> of the LORD,

<sup>1</sup> De. 4. 6. Ps. 111. 10. Pr. 1. 7. 9. 10. Ec.  
12. 13.

Wisdom shall praise herself,  
And shall glory in the midst of her people.  
In the congregation of the Most High shall she  
open her mouth,  
And triumph before his power.  
I came out of the mouth of the Most High,  
And covered the earth as a cloud.  
I dwell in high places,  
And my throne is in a cloudy pillar.  
I alone compassed the circuit of heaven,  
And walked in the bottom of the deep.  
In the waves of the sea, and in all the earth,  
And in every people and nation, I got a possession.  
He created me from the beginning, before the  
world,  
And I shall never fail. ch. xxiv.

28. *And unto man he said.* At what time, or how, Job does not say. Prof. Lee supposes that this refers to the instruction which God gave in Paradise to our first parents; but it may rather be supposed to refer to the universal tenor of the divine communications to man, and to all that God had said about the way of true wisdom. The meaning is, that the substance of all that God had said to man was, that true wisdom was to be found in profound veneration of him. ¶ *The fear of the LORD, that is wisdom.* The word "Lord" here is improperly printed in small capitals, as if the word were יהוה—JEHOVAH.

The original word is, however, אֲדֹנָי—*Adonai*; and the fact is worthy of notice, because one point of the argument respecting the date of the book, turns on the question whether the word JEHOVAH occurs in it. See Notes on ch. xii. 9. The fear of the Lord is often represented as true wisdom. Prov. i. 7, xiv. 27, xv. 33, xix. 23; Ps. cxi. 10, *et al.* The meaning here is, that real wisdom is connected with a proper veneration for God, and with submission

that is wisdom; <sup>m</sup> and to depart from evil is understanding.

<sup>m</sup> Ja. 3. 17.

to him. We cannot understand his ways. Science cannot conduct us up to a full explanation of his government, nor can the most profound investigations disclose all that we would wish to know about God. In these circumstances, true wisdom is found in humble piety; in reverence for the name and perfections of God; in that veneration which leads us to adore him, and to believe that he is right, though clouds and darkness are round about him. To this conclusion Job, in all his perplexities, comes, and here his mind finds rest. ¶ *And to depart from evil is understanding.* To forsake every evil way must be wise. In doing that, man knows that he cannot err. He walks safely who abandons sin, and in forsaking every evil way he knows that he cannot but be right. He may be in error when speculating about God, and the reasons of his government; he may be led astray when endeavoring to comprehend his dealings; but there can be no such perplexity in departing from evil. There he *knows* he is right. There his feet are on a rock. It is better to walk surely there than to involve ourselves in perplexity about profound and inscrutable operations of the divine character and government. It may be added here, also, that he who aims to lead a holy life, who has a virtuous heart, and who seeks to do always what is right, will have a clearer view of the government and truth of God, than the most profound intellect can obtain without a heart of piety; and that without that, all the investigations of the most splendid talents will be practically in vain.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

## ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

**THIS** chapter is closely connected with the two following, and they together constitute a continuous argument. Job returns to his own case, and probably designs<sup>1</sup> to show that this is a striking illustration of the mysteriousness of the divine dealings to which he had adverted in the last chapter. His general aim is to vindicate his own integrity against the charges of his friends, and to show that all that he had said about the unprecedented nature of his afflictions was well founded. In ch. xxix. he beautifully descants on his former prosperity; in ch. xxx. he exhibits the striking contrast between that and his present condition; and in ch. xxxi. in answer to the accusations of his friends, he relates the principal transactions of his past life, asserts his integrity as displayed in the discharge of all the duties which he owed to God and man, and again appeals to the omniscience and justice of God in proof of his sincerity.—*Lowth*.

This chapter is occupied with a description of his former prosperity. He refers particularly to the times when God smiled upon and blessed him; when he lifted the light of his countenance upon him, and his children were round about him, vs. 1—6; he speaks of the respect which was shown him when he went into the place of public concourse—when young men retired before him, when princes and nobles were silent in his presence, and when the ears and eyes of all blessed him for the good that he had done to the fatherless and to him that was ready to perish, vs. 7—13; he speaks of the time when he put on righteousness as a robe and a diadem, and when he was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame, vs. 14—17; and he refers to the fact that he then supposed that his prosperity would be permanent, and to the universal respect in which he was held by all classes of men, vs. 18—25. The whole picture in the chapter is one of uncommon beauty, and describes a state of the highest happiness and prosperity. It is the image of a venerable patriarch, a wise counsellor, a universal benefactor, a composer of difficulties, a man enjoying universal confidence and affection. It is an image of what was *aimed at* as constituting the highest state of earthly blessedness in the estimation of those who lived in patriarchal times, and is a beautiful portraiture of what would be regarded as the most honorable distinction in the hospitality and piety of the East. At the same time it is a beautiful description of piety and its effects everywhere; and of the respect shown to wisdom, virtue, and benevolence, in all ages.

**M**OREOVER Job<sup>1</sup> continued his parable, and said,

<sup>1</sup> added to take up.

1. *Moreover Job continued his parable.* See Notes on ch. xxvii. 1. It is probable that Job had paused to see if any one would attempt a reply. As his friends were silent, he resumed his remarks and went into a more full statement of his sufferings. The fact that Job more than once paused in his addresses to give his friends an opportunity to speak, and that they were silent when they seemed called upon to vindicate their former sentiments, was what particularly roused the wrath of Elihu, and induced him to answer. Ch. xxxii. 2—5.

2. *Oh that I were.* Heb., “Who will give?” a common mode of expressing a wish. Comp. ch. vi. 8, xi. 5, xiii. 5, xxiii. 3. ¶ *As in months past.* Oh that I could recall my former prosperity, and be as I was when I enjoyed the protection and favor of God. Probably

2 Oh that I were as *in* months past, as *in* the days *when* God preserved me;

one object of this wish was that his friends might see from what a state of honor and happiness he had been brought down. They complained of him as impatient. He may have designed to show them that his lamentations were not unreasonable, when it was borne in mind from what a state of prosperity he had been taken, and to what a condition of woe he had been brought. He therefore goes into this extended description of his former happiness, and dwells particularly upon the good which he was enabled then to do, and the respect which was shown him as a public benefactor. A passage strikingly similar to this occurs in Virgil, *Æn.* viii. 560:

“O mihi præteritos referat si Jupiter annos!  
Qualis eram, cùm primam aciem Præneste  
sub ipsâ  
Stravi, scutorumque incendi victor acervos.”

3 When <sup>1</sup> his candle shined upon my head, *and when* by his light I <sup>a</sup> walked *through* darkness;

<sup>1</sup> or, *lamp*.

a Ps. 23. 4.

"O would kind heaven my strength and youth recall,

Such as I was beneath Præneste's wall;  
There where I made the foremost foes retire,  
And set whole heaps of conquered shields on fire!"

3. *When his candle shined upon my head.* Marg. or, *lamp*. Comp. Notes ch. xviii. 6. It was remarked, in the Note on that place, that it was common to have lamps or lights always burning in a house or tent. When Job speaks of the lamps shining *on his head*, the allusion is probably to the custom of suspending a lamp from the ceiling—a custom which prevails among the wealthy Arabs.—*Scott*. Virgil speaks of a similar thing in the palace of Dido:

—"Dependent lychni laquearibus aureis Incensi." *ÆN.* i. 726.

"From gilded roofs depending lamps display  
Nocturnal beams that imitate the day."

DRYDEN.

See, also, Lucretius, ii. 24. Indeed, the custom is common everywhere; and the image is a beautiful illustration of the divine favor—of light and happiness imparted by God, the great source of blessedness from above. The Hebrew word rendered "*shined*" (קָדַח) has been the occasion of some perplexity in regard to its form. According to Ewald, Heb. Gram. p. 471, and Gesenius, Lex., it is the Hiphil form of קָדַח—to shine, the He preformative being dropped. The sense is, "In his causing the light to shine." Others suppose that it is the infinitive of Kal, with a pleonastic suffix; meaning "when it shined;" i. e. the light. The sense is essentially the same. Comp. Schultens and Rosenmüller *in loco*. ¶ *And when by his light.* Under his guidance and direction. ¶ *I walked through darkness.* "Here is reference probably to the fires or other lights which were carried before the caravans in their nightly travels through the deserts."—*Noyes*. The meaning is, that God afforded him protection, instruction, and guidance.

4 As I was in the days of my youth, when the secret <sup>b</sup> of God was upon my tabernacle;

b Ps. 25. 14.

In places, and on subjects that would have been otherwise dark, he counselled and led him. He enjoyed the manifestations of the divine favor; his understanding was enlightened, and he was enabled to comprehend subjects that would have been otherwise perplexing and difficult. He refers, probably, to the inquiries about the divine government and administration, and to the questions that came before him as a magistrate or an umpire—questions that he was enabled to determine with wisdom.

4. *As I was in the days of my youth.* The word here rendered *youth* (יָהֳלֹךְ), properly means *autumn*—from יָהֳלֹךְ, to pluck, pull, as being the time when fruits are gathered. Then it means that which is mature; and the meaning here is probably *mature* or *manly*—"As I was in the days of my ripeness;" that is, of my vigor or strength. The whole passage shows that it does not mean *youth*, for he goes on to describe the honor and respect shown to him when in mature life. So the Septuagint—"Ὅτε ἤμην ἐπιβριθων ὀδὸνς"—"When I made heavy, or laden my ways," an expression referring to autumn as being laden with fruit. So we speak of the spring, the autumn, and the winter of life, and by the autumn denote the maturity of vigor, experience, and wisdom. So the Greeks used the word ὀπώρα, Pindar, *Isthm.* 2, 7, 8; *Nem.* 5, 10, Æschyl. Suppl. 1005, 1022. So Ovid:

"Excipit Autumnus posito fervore juventæ  
Maturus, mitisque inter juvenemque senem-  
que:  
Temperie medius, sparsis per tempora canis.  
Inde senilis hiems tremulo venit horrida  
passu.  
Aut spoliata suos, aut, quos habet, alba capil-  
los." *METAM.* 15. 200.

The wish of Job was, that he might be restored to the vigor of mature life, and to the influence and honors which he had then, or rather, perhaps, it was that they might have a view of what he was

5 When the Almighty *was yet with me, when my children were about me;*

6 When <sup>c</sup> I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured <sup>1</sup> me out rivers of oil;

*c* De. 33. 24.

<sup>1</sup> *with me.*

then, that they might see from what a height he had fallen, and what cause he had of complaint and grief. ¶ *When the secret of God was upon my tabernacle.* The meaning of this language is not clear, and considerable variety has obtained in the interpretation. The LXX render it, "When God watched over—ἐπισκοπῇ ἐποιεῖτο—my house." Vulg., "When God was secretly in my tabernacle." Noyes, "When God was the friend of my tent." Coverdale renders the whole, "As I stood when I was weakly and had enough; when God prospered my house." Umbreit, Als noch traulich Gott in meinem Zelte weilte—"When God remained cordially in my tent." Herder, "When God took counsel with me in my tent." The word rendered *secret* (ἱδὼς), means a couch or cushion on which one reclines, and then, a divan, or circle of friends sitting together in consultation. See the word explained in the Notes on ch. xv. 8. The idea here probably is, that God came into his tent or dwelling as a friend, and that Job was, as it were, admitted to the secrecy of his friendship and to an acquaintance with his plans.

5. *When the Almighty was yet with me.* Job regarded God as withdrawn from him. He now looked back with deep interest to the time when he dwelt with him.

6. *When I washed my steps with butter.* On the word rendered *butter*, see Notes on Isa. vii. 15. It properly means *curdled milk*. Umbreit renders it, *Sahne; cream*. Noyes, *milk*, and so Wemyss. The LXX, "When my ways flowed with butter"—βουτύρῳ. So Coverdale, "When my ways ran over with butter." Herder, "And where I went, a stream of milk flowed on." The sense may be, that cream or butter was so plenty that he was able to make use of it for the most common purposes—even for that of washing his feet. That butter was sometimes used for the purpose of anointing the feet—probably for

comfort and health—as oil was for the head, is mentioned by Oriental travelers. Hasselquist (*Travels in Palestine*, p. 58), speaking of the ceremonies of the priests at Magnesia on Holy Thursday, says, "The priest washed and dried the feet, and afterwards besmeared them with butter, which it was alleged was made from the first milk of a young cow." Bruce says that the king of Abyssinia daily anointed his head with butter. Burder, in *Rosenmüller's alte u. neue Morgenland*, *in loc.* It is possible that this use of butter was as ancient as the time of Job, and that he here alludes to it; but it seems more probable that the image is designed to denote superfluity or abundance; and that where he trod, streams of milk or cream flowed—so abundant was it round him. The word rendered *steps*

does not properly denote *the feet*, but *the tread, the going, the stepping*. This sense corresponds with that of the other member of the parallelism. ¶ *And the rock poured me out rivers of oil.* Marg. *with me.* The idea is, that the very rock near which he stood seemed to pour forth oil. Instead of water gushing out, such seemed to be the abundance with which he was blessed, that the very rock poured out a running stream of oil. Oil was of great value among the Orientals. It was used as an article of food, for light, for anointing the body, and as a valuable medicine. To say, then, that one had abundance of oil, was the same as to say that he had ample means of comfort and of luxury. Perhaps by the word *rock* here, there is an allusion to the places where olives grew. It is said that those which produced the best oil grew upon rocky mountains. There may be, also, an allusion to this in Deut. xxxii. 13: "He made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock." Prof. Lee, and some others, however, understand here by the *rock*, the press where oil was extracted from

7 When I went out to the gate through the city, *when* I prepared my seat in the street!

8 The young men saw me, and hid themselves: and the aged arose, *and* stood up.

olives, and which it is supposed was sometimes made of stone.

7. *When I went out to the gate.* The gate of a city was a place of public concourse, and where courts were usually held. Job speaks here as a magistrate, and of the time when he went forth to sit as a judge, to try causes. ¶ *When I prepared my seat in the street.* That is, to sit as a judge. The seat or tribunal was placed in the street, in the open air, before the gate of the city, where great numbers might be convened, and hear and see justice done. The Arabs, to this day, hold their courts of justice in an open place, under the heavens, as in a field or a market-place. Norden's Travels in Egypt, ii. 140. There has been, however, great variety of opinion in regard to the meaning of this verse. Schultens enumerates no less than *ten* different interpretations of the passage. Herder translates it,

"When from my house I went to the assembly,  
And spread my carpet in the place of meeting."

Prof. Lee translates it, "When I went forth from the gate to the pulpit, and prepared my seat in the broad place." He supposes that Job refers to occasions when he addressed the people, and to the respect which was shown him then. Dr. Good renders it, "As I went forth, the city rejoiced at me." It is probable, however, that our common version has given the true signification. The word rendered *city* (עִיר), is a poetic form for (קִרְיָה) *city*, but does not frequently occur. It is found in Prov. viii. 3, ix. 3, 14, xi. 11. The phrase "*upon the city*" — Heb. עַל-עִירָהּ, — or, "*over the city*," may refer to the fact that the gate was in an elevated place, or that it was the *chief* place, and, as it were, over or at the head of the city. The meaning is, that as he went out from his house toward

9 The princes refrained talking, and laid *their* hand on their mouth.

10 The <sup>1</sup> nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.

<sup>1</sup> *The voice of the nobles was hid.*

the gate that was situated in the most important part of the city, all did him reverence.

8. *The young men saw me, and hid themselves.* That is, they retired as if awed at my presence. They gave place to me, or reverently withdrew as I passed along. ¶ *And the aged arose, and stood up.* They not merely rose, but they continued to stand still until I had passed by. "This is a most elegant description, and exhibits most correctly the great reverence and respect which was paid, even by the old and the decrepit, to the holy man, in passing along the streets, or when he sat in public. They not only rose, which in men so old was a great mark of distinction, but they stood; and they continued to do it, though the attempt was so difficult." — Lowth. The whole image presents a beautiful illustration of Oriental manners, and of the respect paid to a man of known excellence of character and distinction.

9. *The princes refrained talking.* As a mark of respect, or in awe of his presence. ¶ *And laid their hand on their mouth.* To lay the finger or the hand on the mouth is everywhere an action expressive of silence or respect. Notes ch. xxi. 5. "In one of the subterranean vaults of Egypt, where the mummies lie buried, they found in the coffin an embalmed body of a woman, before which was placed a figure of wood, representing a youth on his knees, laying a finger on his mouth, and holding in his other hand a sort of chafing-dish, which was placed on his head, and in which, without doubt, had been some perfumes." — Maillet.

10. *The nobles.* Marg., "*The voice of the nobles was hid.*" Literally, this may be rendered, "as to the voice, the nobles hid themselves;" or the phrase here employed (קָל נְדִידִים נִקְרָא) may be

11 When the ear heard *me*, then it blessed <sup>d</sup> me; and when the eye saw *me*, it gave witness to me:

12 Because I delivered <sup>e</sup> the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and *him that had none* to

<sup>d</sup> Lu. 4. 22. 11. 27.

<sup>e</sup> Ps. 72. 12. Pr. 21. 13. 24. 11, 12.

rendered, "the voice of the nobles was hid"—it being common in the Hebrew, when two nouns come together of different numbers and gender, for the verb to conform to the latter. *Rosenmüller*. The word "nobles" here is to be understood in the sense of *counsellors*, or men of rank. They would now be called *Emirs*, or *Sheiks*. ¶ *And their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth*. They were so awed by my presence that they could not speak.

11. *When the ear heard me*. A personification for "they who heard me speak, blessed me." That is, they commended or praised me. ¶ *And when the eye saw me*. All who saw me. ¶ *It gave witness to me*. That is, the fixed attention to what he said, and the admiration which was shown by the eyes of the multitudes, were witnesses of the respect and honor in which he was held. Gray has a beautiful expression similar to this, when he says,

"He reads his history in a nation's eyes."

12. *Because I delivered the poor that cried*. This is spoken of himself as a magistrate or judge—for the whole description relates to that. The meaning is, that when the poor man, who had no means of employing counsel, brought his cause before him, he heard him and delivered him from the grasp of the oppressor. He never made an appeal to him in vain. Comp. Prov. xxi. 13, xxiv. 11, 12. ¶ *And the fatherless*. The orphan who brought his cause before him. He became the patron and protector of those whose natural protectors—their parents—had been removed by death. Comp. Notes on Isa. i. 17. ¶ *And him that had none to help him*. The poor man, who had no power-

ful patron. Job says that, as a magis-

trate, he particularly regarded the cause of such persons, and saw that justice was done them—a beautiful image of the administration of justice in patriarchal times. This is the sense in which our translators understood this. But the parallelism seems rather to require that this should be applied to the fatherless, who had no one to aid him, and the Hebrew, by understanding the conjunctive <sup>1</sup> as meaning *when*, will bear this construction. So it is understood by *Rosenmüller*, *Umbreit*, *Herder*, and *Noyes*.

14 I <sup>f</sup> put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment *was* as a robe and a diadem.

<sup>f</sup> Isa. 61. 10. Ep. 6. 14.

13. *The blessing of him that was ready to perish*, &c. Of the man who was falsely accused, and who was in danger of being condemned, or of him who was exposed to death by poverty and want. ¶ *And I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy*. By becoming her patron and friend; by vindicating her cause, and saving her from the oppressive exactions of others. Comp. Isa. i. 17.

14. *I put on righteousness*. Or justice—as a magistrate, and in all his transactions with his fellow-men. It is common to compare moral conduct or traits of character with various articles of apparel. Comp. Notes on Isa. xi. 5, lxi. 10. ¶ *And it clothed me*. It was my covering; I was adorned with it. So we speak of being "clothed with humility;" and so also of the "garments of salvation." ¶ *My judgment*. Or rather, justice—particularly as a magistrate. ¶ *Was as a robe*. The word *robe* (מָטָה) denotes the *mantle* or outer garment that is worn by an Oriental. It constitutes the most elegant part of his dress. Notes on Isa. vi. 1. The idea is, that his strict justice was to him

15 I was eyes <sup>g</sup> to the blind, and feet *was* I to the lame.

16 I *was* a father to the poor: and <sup>h</sup> the cause *which* I knew not I searched out.

g Nu. 10. 31.

h Pr. 29. 7.

what the full flowing robe was in apparel. It was that for which he was best known; that by which he was distinguished, as one would be by an elegant and costly robe. ¶ *And a diadem.* Or, turban. The word here used תְּכָנִיף—is from תָּכַן, to roll, or wind around, and is applied to the turban, because it was thus wound around the head. It is applied to the mitre of the high priest (Zech. iii. 5), and may also be to a diadem or crown. It more properly here, however, denotes the *turban*, which in the East is an essential part of dress. The idea is, that he was fully clad or adorned with justice.

15. *I was eyes to the blind.* An exceedingly beautiful expression, whose meaning is obvious. He became their counsellor and guide. ¶ *And feet was I to the lame.* I assisted them, and became their benefactor. I did for them, in providing a support, what they would have done for themselves if they had been in sound health.

16. *I was a father to the poor.* I took them under my protection, and treated them as if they were my own children. ¶ *And the cause which I knew not I searched out.* This is according to the interpretation of Jerome. But the more probable meaning is, "the cause of him who was unknown to me, that is, of the stranger, I searched out." So Rosenmüller, Herder, Umbreit, and Good. According to this, the sense is, that, as a magistrate, he gave particular attention to the cause of the stranger, and investigated it with care. It is possible that Job here designs specifically to reply to the charge brought against him by Eliphaz in ch. xxii. 6, seq. The duty of showing particular attention to the stranger is often inculcated in the Bible, and was regarded as

17 And I brake the <sup>1</sup> jaws of the wicked, and <sup>2</sup> plucked the spoil out of his teeth.

18 Then <sup>1</sup> I said, I shall die in my nest, and I shall multiply *my* days as the sand.

<sup>1</sup> jaw-teeth, or, grinders.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 30. 6.

<sup>2</sup> cast.

essential to a character of uprightness and piety among the Orientals.

17. *And I brake the jaws of the wicked.* Marg. "jaw-teeth, or, grinders." The Hebrew word מַחֲרִיטִים, the same, with the letters transposed, as מַחֲרִיטִים, is from חָרַץ, to bite—and means the biters, the grinders, the teeth. It is not used to denote the jaw. The image here is taken from wild beasts, with whom Job compares the wicked, and says that he rescued the helpless from their grasp, as he would a lamb from a lion or wolf. ¶ *And plucked.* Marg. cast. The margin is a literal translation, but the idea is, that he violently seized the spoil or prey which the wicked had taken, and by force tore it from him.

19. *Then I said.* So prosperous was I, and so permanent seemed my sources of happiness. I saw no reason why all this should not continue, and why the same respect and honor should not attend me to the grave. ¶ *I shall die in my nest.* I shall remain where I am, and in my present comforts, while I live. I shall then die surrounded by my family and friends, and encompassed with honors. A nest is an image of quietness, harmlessness, and comfort. So Spenser speaks of a nest:

"Fayre bosome! fraught with virtue's richest treasure,

*The nest of love, the lodging of delight,*

*The bowre of bliss, the paradise of pleasure."*

SONNET LXXVI.

The image here expresses the firm hope of a long life, and of a peaceful and tranquil death. The LXX render it, "My age shall grow old like the trunk of a palm tree"—στέλεχος φοίνικος—I shall live long. Comp. Bochart, Hieroz. P. ii. Lib. vi. c. v. p. 820, for the reason of this translation. ¶ *And I shall multiply my days as the sand.* Herder ren-

19 My root *was* <sup>1</sup> spread out  
<sup>1</sup> opened.

ders this, "the Phoenix;" and observes that the Phoenix is obviously intended here, only, through a double sense of the word, the figure of the bird is immediately changed for that of the palm-tree. The Rabbins generally understand by the word here rendered 'sand' (חול) the Phoenix—a fabulous bird, much celebrated in ancient times. Rabbi Osaia, in the book *Bereshith Rabba*, or Commentary on Genesis, says of this bird, "that all animals obeyed the woman [in eating the forbidden fruit] except one bird only by the name of חול—*hhul*, concerning which it is said in Job, 'I will multiply my days as the *hhul*—חול." Rabbi Jannai adds to this, that "this bird lives a thousand years, and in the end of the thousand years, a fire goes forth from its nest, and burns it up, but there remains, as it were, an egg, from which again the members grow, and it rises to life." Comp. Nonnus in Dionys. Lib. 40. Martial, Claudian, and others in Bochart, Hieroz. P. ii Lib. vi. c. v. pp. 818—825. But the more correct rendering is, doubtless, the common one, and it is usual in the Scriptures to denote a great, indefinite number, by the sand. Gen. xxii. 17. Judges vii. 12. Habak. i. 9. A comparison similar to this occurs in Ovid, Metam. Lib. xiv. 136, seq.:

— "Ego pulveris hausti  
Ostendens cumulum, quot haberet corpora  
pulvis,  
Tot mihi natales contingere vana rogavi."

The meaning is, that he supposed his days would be very numerous. Such were his expectations—expectations so soon to be disappointed. Such was his condition—a condition so soon to be reversed. The very circumstances in which he was placed were fitted to begot a too confident expectation that his prosperity would continue, and the subsequent dealings of God with him should lead all who are in similar circumstances, not to confide in the stability of their comforts, or to suppose that their prosperity will be uninter-

rupted. It is difficult, when encompassed with friends and honors, to realize that there ever will be reverses; it is difficult to keep the mind from confiding in them as if they *must* be permanent and secure.

19. My root was spread out by the waters. Marg., as the Hebrew, opened. The meaning is, that it was spread abroad or extended far, so that the moisture of the earth had free access to it; or it was like a tree planted near a stream, whose root ran down to the water. This is an image designed to denote great prosperity. In the East, such an image would be more striking than with us. Here green, large, and beautiful trees are so common as to excite little or no attention. In such a country as Arabia, however, where general desolation exists, such a tree would be a most beautiful object, and a most striking image of prosperity. Comp. de Wette on Ps. i. 3. ¶ And the dew lay all night upon my branch. In the absence of rain—which seldom falls in deserts—the scanty vegetation is dependent on the dews that fall at night. Those dews are often very abundant. Volney (Travels i. 51) says, "We, who are inhabitants of humid regions, cannot well understand how a country can be productive without rain, but in Egypt, the dew which falls copiously in the night, supplies the place of rain." See, also, Shaw's Travels, p. 379. "To the same cause also, [the violent heat of the day,] succeeded afterwards by the coldness of the night, we may attribute the plentiful dews, and those thick, offensive mists, one or other of which we had every night too sensible a proof of. The dews, particularly, (as we had the heavens only for our covering,) would frequently wet us to the skin." The sense here is, as a tree standing on the verge of a river, and watered each night by copious dews, appears beautiful and flourishing, so was my condition. The LXX, however, render this, "And the dew abode at night on my harvest"—*kai*



20 My glory was <sup>1</sup> fresh in me, and my <sup>k</sup> bow was <sup>2</sup> renewed in my hand.

21 Unto me *men* gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel.

<sup>1</sup> new. <sup>k</sup> Ge. 49. 24. <sup>2</sup> changed.

δρόσος ἀύλισθήσεται ἐν τῷ θερисμῷ μου. So the Chaldee—דְּרֹסֹס נִחַיָּה אֶת־הַיֵּשֶׁבֶת. A thought, similar to the one in this passage, occurs in a Chinese Ode, translated by Sir William Jones, in his works, vol. ii. p. 351:

"Vide illius aquæ rivum.

Virides arundines jucundè luxuriant!

Sic est decorus virtutibus PRINCEPS NOSTER!"

"Seest thou yon stream, around whose banks The green reeds crowd in joyous ranks? In nutrient virtue and in grace, Such is the PRINCE that rules our race."

DR. GOOD.

20. My glory was fresh in me. Marg., new. "As we say, the man shall not overlive himself." Umbreit. The idea is, that he was not exhausted; he continued in vigor and strength. The image is probably taken from that suggested in the previous verse—from a tree, whose beauty and vigor were continued by the waters, and by the dew that lay on its branches. ¶ And my bow. An emblem of vigor and strength. The ancients fought with the bow, and hence a man who was able to keep his bow constantly drawn, was an image of undiminished and unwearied vigor. Comp. Gen. xlix. 24: "But his bow abode in strength." ¶ Was renewed in my hand. Marg., as in Heb., changed. The meaning is, that it constantly renewed its strength. The idea is taken from a tree, which changes by renewing its leaves, beauty, and vigor. Isa. ix. 10. Comp. Job xiv. 7. The sense is, that his bow gathered strength in his hand. The figure is very common in Arabic poetry, many specimens of which may be seen in Schultens in loco.

21. Unto me men gave ear. Job here returns to the time when he sat in the assembly of counsellors, and to the respectful attention which was paid to all that he said. They listened when he

22 After my words they spake not again; and my speech dropped upon them.

23 And they waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain.

spake; they waited for him to speak before they gave their opinion; and they were then silent. They neither interrupted him nor attempted a reply.

22. After my words they spake not again. The highest proof which could be given of deference. So full of respect were they that they did not dare to dispute him; so sagacious and wise was his counsel that they were satisfied with it, and did not presume to suggest any other. ¶ And my speech dropped upon them. That is, like the dew or the gentle rain. So in Deut. xxxii. 2:

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain;

My speech shall distil as the dew,

As the small rain upon the tender herb,

And as the showers upon the grass."

So Homer speaks of the eloquence of Nestor,

Τοῦ καὶ ἀπὸ γλώσσης μέλιτος γλυκίων ῥέειν αὐδῆ.

"Words sweet as honey from his lips distill'd." POPE.

So Milton, speaking of the eloquence of Belial, says,

— "Though his tongue

Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear

The better reason, to perplex and dash

Maturest counsels." PAR. LOST, B. ii.

The comparison in the Scriptures of words of wisdom or persuasion, is sometimes derived from honey, that drops or gently falls from the comb. Thus in Prov. v. 3:

"For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honey-comb,

And her mouth is smoother than oil."

So in Cant. iv. 11:

"Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honey-comb;

Honey and milk are under thy tongue."

23. And they waited for me as for the rain. That is, as the dry and thirsty earth waits for the rain. This is a

24 *If I laughed on them, they believed it not; and the light of my countenance they cast not down.*

continuation of the beautiful image commenced in the previous verse, and conveys the idea that his counsel was as necessary in the assemblies of men as the rain was to give growth to the seed, and beauty to the landscape. ¶ *And they opened their mouth wide.* Expressive of earnest desire. Comp. Ps. cxix. 131: "I opened my mouth and panted." ¶ *As for the latter rain.* The early and the latter rains are frequently spoken of in the Scriptures, and in Palestine and the adjacent regions are both necessary to the harvest. The early, or autumnal rains, commence in the latter half of October, or the beginning of November, not suddenly, but by degrees, so as to give the husbandman an opportunity to sow his wheat and barley. The rains come mostly from the west, or southwest, continuing for two or three days at a time, and falling especially during the nights. During the months of November and December, they continue to fall heavily; afterwards they return only at longer intervals, and are less heavy; but at no period during the winter do they entirely cease to occur. Rain continues to fall more or less during the month of March, but it is rare after that period. The latter rains denote those which fall in the month of March, and which are so necessary in order to bring forward the harvest, which ripens early in May or June. If those rains fail, the harvest materially suffers, and hence the expressions in the Scriptures, that "the husbandman waits for that rain." Comp. James v. 7; Prov. xvi. 15. The expression, "the early and the latter rain," seems, unless some material change has occurred in Palestine, not to imply that no rain fell in the interval, but that those rains were usually more copious, or were especially necessary, first for sowing, and then for bringing forward the harvest. In the interval between the "latter" and the "early" rains—between March and October—rain never falls, and the sky is usually serene. See Robinson's Bibl. Re-

searches, vol. ii. pp. 96—100. The meaning here is, that they who were assembled in counsel earnestly desired Job to speak, as the farmer desires the rain that will bring forward his crop.

24. *If I laughed on them, they believed it not.* There is considerable variety in the interpretation of this member of the verse. Dr. Good renders it, "I smiled upon them, and they were gay." Herder, "If I laughed at them, they were not offended." Coverdale, "When I laughed, they knew well it was not earnest." Schultens, "I will laugh at them; they are not secure." But Rosenmüller, Jun. et Trem., Noyes, and Umbreit, accord with the sense given in our common translation. The Hebrew literally is, "Should I laugh upon them, they did not confide;" and, according to Rosenmüller, the meaning is, "Such was the reverence for my gravity, that if at any time I relaxed in my severity of manner, they would scarcely believe it, nor did they omit any of their reverence towards me, as if familiarity with the great should produce contempt." Grotius explains it to mean, "Even my jests, they thought, contained something serious." The word here used, however (צחק), means not only to laugh or smile upon, but to laugh at, or deride. Ps. lii. 8. Job xxx. 1. Comp. Job v. 22, xxxix. 7, xviii. 22. It seems to me, that the sense is, that so great was his influence, that he was able to control them even with a smile, without saying a word; that if, when a measure was proposed in debate, he should even smile, though he said nothing, they would have no confidence in it, but would at once abandon it as unwise. No higher influence than this can be well conceived; and this exposition accords with the general course of remark, where Job traces along the various degrees of his influence till he comes to this, the highest of them all. ¶ *And the light of my countenance they cast not down.* His smile of favor on an undertaking, or his

25 I chose out their way, and  
sat chie and dwelt as a king in

the army, as one *that* comforteth  
the mourners.

smile at the weakness or want of wisdom of anything proposed, they could not resist. It settled the matter. They had not power by their arguments or moral courage to resist him, even if he did not say a word, or even to change the aspect of his countenance. A look, a token of approbation or disapprobation from him, was enough.

25. *I chose out their way.* That is, I became their guide and counsellor. Rosenmüller and Noyes explain this as meaning, "When I came among them;" that is, when I chose to go in their way, or in their midst. But the former interpretation better agrees with the Hebrew, and with the connexion. Job is speaking of the honors shown to him, and one of the highest which he could receive was to be regarded as a leader, and to have such respect shown to his opinions that he was even allowed to select the way in which they should go; that is, that his counsel was implicitly followed. ¶ *And sat chief.* Heb., "sat head." He was at the head of their assemblies. ¶ *And dwelt as a king in the army.* As a king, surrounded by a multitude of troops, all of whom were subservient to his will, and whom he could command at pleasure. It is not to be inferred from this, that Job was a king, or that he was at the head of a nation. The idea is, merely, that the same respect was shown to him which is to a monarch at the head of an army. ¶ *As one that comforteth the mourners.* In time of peace I was their counsellor, and in time of war they looked to me for direction, and in time of affliction they came to me for consolation. There were no classes which did not show me respect, and there were no honors which they were not ready to heap on me.

It may seem, perhaps, that in this chapter there is a degree of self-commendation and praise altogether inconsistent with that consciousness of deep unworthiness which a truly pious man should have. How, it may be asked, can this spirit be consistent with re-

ligion? Can a man who has any proper sense of the depravity of his heart, speak thus in commendation of his own righteousness, and recount with such apparent satisfaction his own good deeds? Would not true piety be more distrustful of self, and be less disposed to magnify its own doings? And is there not here a recalling to recollection of former honors, in a manner which shows that the heart was more attached to them than that of a man whose hope is in heaven should be? It may not be possible to vindicate Job in this respect altogether, nor is it necessary for us to attempt to prove that he was entirely perfect. We are to remember, also, the age in which he lived; we are not to measure what he said and did by the knowledge which we have, and the clearer light which shines upon us. We are to bear in recollection the circumstances in which he was placed, and perhaps we shall find in them a mitigation for what seems to us to exhibit such a spirit of self-reliance, and which looks so much like the lingering love of the honors of this world. Particularly, we may recall the following considerations:

(1.) He was vindicating himself from charges of enormous guilt and hypocrisy. To meet these charges, he runs over the leading events of his life, and shows what had been his general aim and purpose. He reminds them, also, of the respect and honor which had been shown him by those who best knew him—by the poor, the needy, the inhabitants of his own city, the people of his own tribe. To vindicate himself from the severe charges which had been alleged against him, it was not improper thus to advert to the general course of his life, and to refer to the respect in which he had been held. Who could know him better than his neighbors? Who could be better witnesses than the poor whom he had relieved; and the lame, the blind, the sorrowful, whom he had comforted? Who could better testify to his character than they who had fol-

lowed his counsel in times of perplexity and danger? Who would be more competent witnesses than the mourners whom he had comforted?

(2.) It was a main object with Job to show the greatness of his distress and misery; and for this purpose he went into an extended statement of his former happiness, and especially of the respect which had been shown him. This he contrasts beautifully with his present condition, and the colors of the picture are greatly heightened by the contrast. In forming our estimate of this chapter, we should take this object into the account, and should not charge him with a design to magnify his own righteousness, when his main purpose was only to exhibit the extent and depth of his present woes.

(3.) It is not improper for a man to speak of his former prosperity and happiness in the manner in which Job did. He does not speak of himself as having any merit, or as relying on this for salvation. He distinctly traces it all to God (vs. 2—5), and says that it was because *he* blessed him that he had enjoyed these comforts. It was not an improper acknowledgment of the mer-

cies which he had received from his hand, and the remembrance was fitted to excite his gratitude. And although there may seem to us something like parade and ostentation in thus dwelling on former honors, and recounting what he had done in days that were past, yet we should remember how natural it was for him, in the circumstances of trial in which he then was, to revert to past scenes, and to recall the times of prosperity, and the days when he enjoyed the favor of God.

(4.) It may be added, that few men have ever lived to whom this description would be applicable. It must have required uncommon and very remarkable worth to have made it proper for him thus to speak, and to be able to say all this so as not to be exposed to contradiction. The description is one of great beauty, and presents a lovely picture of patriarchal piety, and of the respect which then was shown to eminent virtue and worth. It is an illustration of the respect that *will* be, and that *ought* to be, shown to one who is upright in his dealings with men, benevolent towards the poor and the helpless, and steady in his walk with God.

## CHAPTER XXX.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

THE design of Job in this chapter is, to contrast his condition at the time when he spake it with his former happiness and prosperity. The afflictions which he describes are mainly those which result from the want of respect and honor which he had formerly enjoyed. He begins by saying (vs. 1—11) that the most vile and abject of society now treated him with disrespect and irreverence—the very outcasts and dregs of mankind now made him their song. He then goes on to say (vs. 12—14) that the youths, instead of showing him the respect and reverence which they had once done, now joined with others in adding to his calamities. He then (vs. 15—19) adverts to the depth of his bodily sufferings, and to the painful and loathsome nature of the disease which had come upon him. He says (vs. 20—24) that he cried in vain to God, and that he felt assured that he meant to bring him down to death. In the conclusion of the chapter (vs. 25—31) he says, that notwithstanding he had shown compassion to the poor, and had as a consequence looked for some token of the divine favor and approbation, yet nothing but calamity came, and he was now plunged in the deepest distress; he was a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls.

**B**UT now *they that are*<sup>1</sup> younger than I have me in derision,  
<sup>1</sup> of fewer days.

1. But now they that are younger than I. Marg., of fewer days. It is

whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock.

not probable that Job here refers to his three friends. It is not possible to de-

2 Yea, whereto *might* the strength of their hands *profit* me, in whom old age was perished?

termine their age with accuracy, but in ch. xv. 10, they claim that there were with them old and very aged men, much older than the father of Job. Though that place may possibly refer not to themselves, but to those who held the same opinions with them, yet none of those who engaged in the discussion, except Elihu (ch. xxxii. 6), are represented as young men. They were the contemporaries of Job; men who are ranked as his friends; and men who showed that they had had opportunities for long and careful observation. The reference here, therefore, is to the fact that while, in the days of his prosperity, even the aged and the honorable rose up to do him reverence, now he was the object of contempt even by the young and the worthless. The Orientals would feel this much. It was among the chief virtues with them to show respect to the aged, and their sensibilities were peculiarly keen in regard to any indignity shown to them by the young. ¶ *Whose fathers I would have disdained.* Who are the children of the lowest and most degraded of the community. How deep the calamity to be so fallen as to be the subject of derision by such men! ¶ *To have set with the dogs of my flock.* To have associated with my dogs in guarding my flock. That is, they were held in less esteem than his dogs. This was the lowest conceivable point of debasement. The Orientals had no language that would express greater contempt of any one than to call him a dog. Comp. Deut. xxiii. 18; 1 Sam. xvii. 43; xxiv. 14; 2 Sam. iii. 8; ix. 8; xvi. 9; 2 Kings, viii. 13; Note, Isa. lxvi. 3.

2. Yea, whereto might the strength of their hands profit me. There has been much difference of opinion respecting the meaning of this passage. The general sense is clear. Job means to describe those who were reduced by poverty and want, and who were without respectability or home, and who

3 For want and famine *they* were <sup>1</sup> solitary; fleeing into the wilderness <sup>2</sup> in former time desolate and waste.

<sup>1</sup> or, dark as the night.

<sup>2</sup> yesternight.

had no power in any way to affect him. He states that they were *so* abject and worthless as not to be worth his attention; but even *this* fact is intended to show how low he was himself reduced, since even the most degraded ranks in life did not show any respect to one who had been honored by princes. The Vulgate renders this, "The strength—*virtus*—of whose hands is to me as nothing, and they are regarded as unworthy of life." The LXX, "And the strength of their hands, what is it to me? Upon whom perfection—*συντέλεια*—has perished." Coverdale, "The power and strength of their hands might do me no good, and as for their age, it is spent and passed away without any profit." The literal translation is, "Even the strength of their hands, what is it to me?" The meaning is, that their power was not worth regarding. They were abject, feeble, and reduced by hunger—poor emaciated creatures, who could do him neither good nor evil. Yet this fact did not make him feel less the indignity of being treated by such vagrants with scorn. ¶ *In whom old age was perished?* Or, rather, in whom vigor, or the power of accomplishing anything, has ceased. The word כֵּלָה *kēlāh*, means completion, or the act or power of finishing or completing anything. Then it denotes old age—age as finished or completed. Job v. 26. Here it means the maturity or vigor which would enable a man to complete or accomplish anything, and the idea is, that in these persons this had utterly perished. Reduced by hunger and want, they had no power of effecting anything, and were unworthy of regard. The word here used occurs only in this book in Hebrew (chs. v. 26, xxx. 2), but is common in Arabic, where it refers to the wrinkles, the wanness, and the austere aspect of the countenance, especially in age. See *Castell's Lex.*

3. For want and famine. By hunger

#### 4 Who cut up mallows by the bushes, and juniper roots for their meat.

and poverty their strength is wholly exhausted, and they are among the miserable outcasts of society. In order to show the depth to which he himself was sunk in public estimation, Job goes into a description of the state of these miserable wretches, and says that he was treated with contempt by the very scum of society, by those who were reduced to the most abject wretchedness, and who wandered in the deserts, subsisting on roots, without clothing, shelter, or home, and who were chased away by the respectable portion of the community as if they were thieves and robbers. The description is one of great power, and presents a sad picture of his own condition. ¶ They were *solitary*. Marg., or, *dark as the night*. Heb., גַּלְגַּל. This word properly means *hard*, and is applied to a dry, stony, barren soil. In Arabic it means a hard rock. Umbreit. In ch. iii. 7, it is applied to a night in which none are born. Here it seems to denote a countenance, dry, hard, emaciated with hunger. Jerome renders it, *sterile*. The LXX, ἀγονος—*sterile*. Prof. Lee, "Hardly beset." The meaning is, that they were greatly reduced—or *dried up*—by hunger and want. So Umbreit renders it, *gantz ausgedorrt*—*altogether dried up*. ¶ *Fleeing into the wilderness*. Into the desert or lonely wastes. That is, they fled there to obtain, on what the desert produced, a scanty subsistence. Such is the usual explanation of the word rendered *flee*—פָּרַץ. But the Vulgate, the Syriac, and the Arabic, render it *gnawing*, and this is followed by Umbreit, Noyes, Schultens, and Good. According to this the meaning is, that they were 'gnawers of the desert;' that is, that they lived by gnawing the roots and shrubs which they found in the desert. This idea is much more expressive, and agrees with the connection. The word occurs in Hebrew only in this verse and in ver. 17, where it is rendered "My sinews," but which may more appropriately be rendered 'My gnawing pains.' In the Syriac and

Arabic the word means to *gnaw*, or *corrode*, as the leading signification, and as the sense of the word cannot be determined by its usage in the Hebrew, it is better to depend on the ancient versions, and on its use in the cognate languages. According to this, the idea is, that they picked up a scanty subsistence as they could find it, by gnawing roots and shrubs in the deserts. ¶ *In former time*. Marg., *yesternight*. The Hebrew word (לַיְלָה) means properly *last night*; the latter part of the preceding day, and then it is used to denote night or darkness in general. Gesenius supposes that this refers to the *night of desolation*, the pathless desert being strikingly compared by the Orientals with darkness. According to this, the idea is not that they had gone but yesterday into the desert, but that they went into the shades and solitudes of the wilderness, far from the abodes of men. The sense, then, is, "They fled into the night of desolate wastes." ¶ *Desolate and waste*. In Hebrew the same word occurs in different forms, designed to give *emphasis*, and to describe the gloom and solitariness of the desert in the most impressive manner. We should express the same idea by saying that they hid themselves in the *shades* of the wilderness.

4. *Who cut up mallows*. For the purpose of eating. Mallows are common medicinal plants, famous for their emollient or softening properties, and the size and brilliancy of their flowers. It is not probable, however, that Job referred to what we commonly understand by the word mallows. It has been commonly supposed that he meant a species of plant, called by the Greeks Halimus, a saltish plant, or *salt-wort*, growing commonly in the deserts and on poor land, and eaten as a salad. The Vulgate renders it simply *herbas*; the LXX, ἀλίμα—*alima*. The Hebrew word, according to Humbreit, means a common salad of a saltish taste, whose young leaves being cooked, constituted food for the poorer classes. The Hebrew

## 5 They were driven forth from

word מלח—*mällüäh* is from מלח—*mälüh*, salt, and properly refers to a marine plant or vegetable. ¶ *By the bushes.* Or among the bushes; that is, that which grew among the bushes of the desert. They wandered about in the desert that they might obtain this very humble fare. ¶ *And juniper roots.* The word here rendered “juniper”

(רֹתֵם—*rothem*), occurs only in this place, and in 1 Kings xix. 4, 5; Ps. cxx. 4. In each place it is rendered *juniper*. In 1 Kings it is mentioned as the tree under which Elijah sat down when he fled into the wilderness for his life. In Ps. cxx. 4, it is mentioned as a material for making coals. “Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.” It is rendered *juniper* by Jerome, and by the Rabbins. The verb (רָתַם) occurs in Micah i. 13, where it is rendered *bind*, and means, to bind on, to make fast; and probably the plant here referred to received its name in some way from the notion of *binding*—perhaps because its long, flexible, and slender twigs were used for binding, or for *withes*. There is no evidence, however, that the *juniper* is in any case intended. It denotes a species of *broom*—*spartium junceum* of Linn., which grows abundantly in the deserts of Arabia. It is the *Genista ratam* of Forskal. *Flora Egypt. Arab.* p. 214. It has small variegated blossoms, and grows in the water-courses of the Wady. Dr. Robinson (*Bibl. Researches*, i. 299) says, “The *Retem* is the largest and most conspicuous shrub of these deserts, growing thickly in the water-courses and valleys. Our Arabs always selected the place of encampment (if possible) in a place where it grew, in order to be sheltered by it at night from the wind; and, during the day, when they often went on in advance of the camels, we found them not unfrequently sitting or sleeping under a bush of Retem, to protect them from the sun. It was in this very desert, a day’s journey from Beersheba, that the prophet Elijah lay down and

among *men*, (they cried after them as *after* a thief;)

slept beneath the same shrub. The roots are very bitter, and are regarded by the Arabs as yielding the best charcoal. The Hebrew name רֹתֵם, *Rothem*, is the same as the present Arabic name.” Burckhardt remarks, that he found several Bedawins in the Wady Genne collecting brushwood, which they burnt into charcoal for the Egyptian market, and adds that they preferred for this purpose the thick roots of the shrub Rethem (رثم), which grew there in abundance.

Travels in Syria, p. 483. It could have been only those who were reduced to the utmost penury and want that could have made use of the roots of this shrub for food, and this is doubtless the idea which Job means to convey. It is said to have been occasionally used for food by the poor. See Gesenius, *Lex.*; Umbreit, *in loc.*, and Schultens. A description of the condition of the poor, remarkably similar to this, occurs in Lucan. Lib. vi:

—“Cernit miserabile vulgus

In pecudum cecidisse cibos, et carpere dumos,  
Et foliis spoliare nemus.”

Biddulph (in the collection of Voyages from the Library of the Earl of Oxford, p. 807), says he has seen many poor people in Syria gather mallows and clover, and when he had asked them what they designed to do with it, they answered that it was for food. They cooked and ate them. Herodotus, viii. 115, says, that the army of Xerxes, after their defeat, when they had consumed all the corn of the inhabitants in Thesaly, “fed on the natural produce of the earth, stripping wild and cultivated trees alike of their bark and leaves, to such an extremity of famine were they come.”

5. *They were driven forth from among men.* As vagabonds and outcasts. They were regarded as unfit to live among the civilized and the orderly, and were expelled as nuisances. ¶ (*They cried after them as after a thief.*) The inhabitants of the place where they lived drove them out with a loud outcry, as if they were thieves and robbers. A

6 To dwell in the cliffs of the valleys, *in* caves <sup>1</sup> of the earth, and *in* the rocks.

7 Among the bushes they

<sup>1</sup> holcs.

class of persons are here described who were mere vagrants and plunderers, and who were not allowed to dwell in civilized society, and it was one of the highest aggravations of the calamities of Job, that he was now treated with derision by such outcasts.

6. *To dwell in the cliffs of the valleys.*

The word here rendered *cliffs* (צָרַר) denotes rather *horror*, or something *horrid*, and the sense here is, that they dwelt in the *horror of valleys*; that is, in horrid valleys. The idea is that of deep and frightful glens, where wild beasts ranged, far from the abodes of men, and surrounded by frightful wastes.

The word rendered *valleys* (נָחַל) means, properly, a brook, stream, water-course—what is now called a *wady*; a place where the winter torrents run, but which is usually dry in summer. See Notes on ch. vi. 15. ¶ *In caves of the earth.* Marg., as in Heb., *holes*. Sept., “Whose houses are—τρωγλῆαι πετρῶν—caverns of the rocks;” that is, who are *Troglodytes*. Caves furnished a natural dwelling for the poor and the outcast, and it is well known that it was not uncommon in Egypt, and in the deserts of Arabia, to occupy such caves as a habitation. See Diod. Sic., Lib. iii. xiv.; and Strabo, Lib. xvi. ¶ *And in the rocks.* The caverns of the rocks. Dr. Richardson found a large number of such dwellings in the vicinity of Thebes, many of which were large and beautifully formed, and sculptured with many curious devices. Mr. Rich, also, saw a large number of such caves not far from Mousal. Residence in Koor-distan, vol. ii. p. 94.

7. *Among the bushes.* Coverdale, “Upon the dry heath went they about crying.” The Hebrew word is the same which occurs in ver. 4, and means *bushes* in general. They were heard in the shrubbery that grew in the desert.

brayed; under the nettles they were gathered together.

8 *They were* children of fools, yea, children <sup>a</sup> of base <sup>2</sup> men: they were viler than the earth.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. 49. 10—13.

<sup>2</sup> men of no name.

¶ *They brayed*—נָחַר. The Vulgate renders this, “They were concealed.” The LXX, “Amidst sweet sounds they cry out.” Noyes, “They utter their cries.” The Hebrew word properly means to *bray*. It occurs only here and in ch. vi. 5, where it is applied to the ass. The sense here is, that the voices of this vagrant and wretched multitude were heard in the desert like the braying of asses. ¶ *Under the nettles.* Dr. Good, “Under the briars.” Prof. Lee, “Beneath the broom-pea.” Noyes, “Under the thorns.” The Hebrew word נָחַר—*hhârûl*, occurs only here and in Zech. ii. 9, and Prov. xxiv. 31, in each of which places it is rendered *nettles*. It is probably derived from נָחַר=נָחַר, to burn, to glow, and is given to nettles from the burning or prickling sensation which they produce. Either the word, nettles, thistles, or thorns, would sufficiently answer to its derivation. It does not occur in the Arabic. *Castell.* Umbreit renders it, *unter Dornen—under thorns*. ¶ *They were gathered together.* Vulg., “They accounted it a delicacy to be in a thorn-hedge.” The word here used (סָפַח) means to *add*; and then, to be added or assembled together. The idea is, that they were huddled together quite promiscuously in the wild-growing bushes of the desert. They had no home; no separate habitation. This description is interesting, not only as denoting the depth to which Job had been reduced when he was the object of contempt by such vagrants, but as illustrative of a state of society existing then.

8. *They were children of fools.* The word rendered *fools*, נָבָל—*Nâbâl*, means, (1,) stupid, foolish; and (2,) abandoned, impious. Comp. 1 Sam. xxv. 3, 25 Here it means the worthless, the refuse of society, the abandoned. They had



9 And now am I<sup>b</sup> their song,  
yea, I am their<sup>c</sup> byword.

10 They abhor me, they flee  
far from me, and<sup>1</sup> spare not to

b Ps. 69. 12. La. 3. 14, 63. c c. 17. 6.

<sup>1</sup> withhold not spittle from

spit<sup>d</sup> in my face.

11 Because he hath loosed  
my cord, and afflicted me, they  
have also let loose the bridle be-  
fore me.

d Is. 50. 6. Mat. 26. 67. 27. 30.

no respectable parentage. Umbreit, "A brood of infamy." Coverdale, "Children of fools and villains." ¶ *Children of base men.* Marg., as in Hebrew, *men of no name.* They were men of no reputation; whose ancestors had in no way been distinguished; possibly meaning, also, that they herded together as beasts, without even a name. ¶ *They were viler than the earth.* Gesenius renders this, "They are frightened out of the land." The Hebrew word (נָחַץ) means to chide, to upbraid, and then in Niph., to be chidden away, or driven off. The sense is, as an impious and low-born race they were driven out of the land.

9. *And now am I their song.* See ch. xvii. 6. Comp. Ps. lxi. 12, "I was the song of the drunkards." Lam. iii. 14, "I was a derision to all my people, and their song all the day." The sense is, that they made Job and his calamities the subject of low jesting, and treated him with contempt. His name and sufferings would be introduced into their scurrilous songs, to give them pith and point, and to show how much they despised him now. ¶ *Yea, I am their byword.* See Notes on ch. xvii. 6.

10. *They abhor me.* Heb., They regard me as abominable. ¶ *They flee far from me.* Even such an impious and low-born race now will have nothing to do with me. They would consider it no honor to be associated with me, but keep as far from me as possible. ¶ *And spare not to spit in my face.* Marg., *withhold not spittle from.* Noyes renders this, "Before my face;" and so Luther, Wemyss, Umbreit, and Prof. Lee. The Hebrew may mean either to spit in the face, or to spit in the presence of any one. It is quite immaterial which interpretation is adopted, since in the view of Orientals the one was considered about the same as the other.

In their notions of courtesy and urbanity, he commits an insult of the same kind who spits in the presence of another which he would if he spit on him. Are they not right? Should it not be so considered everywhere? Yet how different their views from the more refined notions of the civilized Occidentals! In America, more than in any other land, are offences of this kind frequent and gross. Of nothing do foreigners complain of us more, or with more justice; and much as we boast of our intelligence and refinement, we should gain much if in this respect we would sit down at the feet of a Bedawin Arab, and incorporate his views into our maxims of politeness.

11. *Because he hath loosed my cord.* According to this translation, the reference here is to God, and the sense is, that the reason why he was thus derided and contemned by such a worthless race was, that God had unloosed his cord. That is, God had rendered him incapable of vindicating himself, or of inflicting punishment. The figure, according to this interpretation, is taken from a bow, and Job means to say that his bow was relaxed, his vigor was gone, and they now felt that they might insult him with impunity. But instead of the usual reading in the Hebrew text, יִתְּרִי—*Yithri—my nerve*, another reading, יִתְּרִיב—*Yithriv—his nerve*, is found in the keri or margin. This reading has been adopted in the text by Jahn, and is regarded as genuine by Rosenmüller, Umbreit, and Noyes. According to this, the meaning is, that the worthless rabble that now treated him with so much contempt, had relaxed all restraint, and they who had hitherto been under some curb, now rushed upon him in the most unbridled manner. They had cast off all restraint arising from respect to his rank, standing,

12 Upon my right hand rise the youth; they push away my feet, and they raise up against me the ways of their destruction.

moral worth, and the dread of his power, and now treated him with every kind of indignity. ¶ *And afflicted me.* By the disrespect and contempt which they have evinced. ¶ *They have also let loose the bridle before me.* That is, they have cast off all restraint—repeating the idea in the first member of the verse.

12. *Upon my right hand rise the youth.* The right hand is the place of honor, and therefore it was felt to be a greater insult that they should occupy even that place. The word rendered *youth* (נַפְלָא) occurs nowhere else in the Hebrew Scriptures. It is probably from נָפַץ, to sprout, germinate, blossom; and hence would mean a *progeny*, and would be probably applied to beasts. It is rendered by Jerome, *calamities*; by the LXX, "Upon the right hand of the progeny, or brood (βλαστού), they rise," where Schleusner conjectures that βλαστοί should be read, "On the right hand rise a brood or progeny." Umbreit renders it, *eine Brut—a brood*. So Rosenmüller, Noyes, and Schultens. The idea then is, that this rabble rose up, even on his right hand, as a brood of wild animals—a mere rabble that impeded his way. ¶ *They push away my feet.* Instead of giving place for me, they jostle and crowd me from my path. Once the aged and the honorable rose and stood in my presence, and the youth retired at my coming, but now this worthless rabble crowds along with me, jostles me in my goings, and shows me no manner of respect. Comp. ch. xxix. 8. ¶ *And they raise up against me the ways of their destruction.* They raise up against me destructive ways, or ways that tend to destroy me. The figure is taken from an advancing army, that casts up ramparts and other means of attack designed for the destruction of a besieged city. They were, in like manner, constantly making advances against Job, and pressing on him in a

13 They mar my path, they set forward my calamity, they have no helper.

manner that was designed to destroy him.

13. *They mar my path.* They break up all my plans. Perhaps, here, also, the image is taken from war, and Job may represent himself as on a line of march, and he says that this rabble comes and breaks up his path altogether. They break down the bridges, and tear up the way, so that it is impossible to pass along. His plans of life were embarrassed by them, and they were to him a perpetual annoyance. ¶ *They set forward my calamity.* Luther renders this part of the verse, "It was so easy for them to injure me, that they needed no help." The literal translation of the Hebrew here would be, "they profit for my ruin;" that is, they bring as it were profit to my ruin; they help it on; they promote it. A similar expression occurs in Zech. i. 15, "I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction;" that is, they aided in urging it forward. The idea here is, that they hastened his fall. Instead of assisting him in any way, they contributed all they could to bring him down to the dust. ¶ *They have no helper.* Very various interpretations have been given of this phrase. It may mean, that they had done this alone, without the aid of others; or that they were persons who were held in abhorrence, and whom no one would assist; or that they were worthless and abandoned persons. Schultens has shown that the phrase, *one who has no helper*, is proverbial among the Arabs, and denotes a worthless person, or one of the lowest class. In proof of this, he quotes the Hamasa, which he thus translates, Videmus vos ignobiles, pauperes, quibus nullus ex reliquis hominibus adjutor. See, also, other similar expressions quoted by him from Arabic writings. The idea here then is, probably, that they were so worthless and abandoned that no one would help them, an expression denoting the utmost degradation.

19 He hath cast <sup>f</sup> me into the mire, and I am become like dust and ashes.

20 I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me: I stand up, and thou regardest me *not*.

21 Thou art <sup>1</sup> become cruel to  
f c. 9. 31.      <sup>1</sup> turned to be.

made like a shirt, to be gathered around the neck, and the idea is, that his disease fitted close to him, and was gathered close around him.

19. *He hath cast me into the mire.* That is, God has done it. In this book the name of God is often understood where the speaker seems to avoid it, in order that it may not be needlessly repeated. On the meaning of the expression here, see Notes on ch. ix. 31. ¶ *And I am become like dust and ashes.* Either in appearance, or I am regarded as being as worthless as the mire of the streets. Rosenmüller supposes it means, "I am more like a mass of inanimate matter than a living man."

20. *I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me.* This was a complaint which Job often made, that he could not get the ear of God; that his prayer was not regarded, and that he could not get his cause before him. Comp. ch. xiii. 3, 19, seq., and ch. xxvii. 9. ¶ *I stand up.* Standing was a common posture of prayer among the ancients. See Heb. xi. 21. 1 Kings viii. 14, 55. Neh. ix. 2. The meaning is, that when Job stood up to pray, God did not regard his prayer.

21. *Thou art become cruel to me.* Marg. *turned to be.* This language, applied to God, seems to be harsh and irreverent, and it may well be inquired whether the word *cruel* does not express an idea which Job did not intend. The Hebrew word אִכְזַר, is from an obsolete root כָּזַר—not found in Hebrew. The

Arabic root كَسَر—nearly the same as this, means to break with violence; to rout as an enemy; then to be enraged. In the Syriac, the primary idea is, that of a soldier, and thence it may refer to

me: with thy <sup>2</sup> strong hand thou opposest thyself against me.

22 Thou liftest me up to the wind; thou causest me to ride upon it, and dissolvest my <sup>3</sup> substance.

<sup>2</sup> the strength of thy hand.      <sup>3</sup> or, wisdom.

such acts of violence as a soldier commonly commits. The word occurs in Hebrew in the following places, and is translated in the following manner. It is rendered *cruel* in Deut. xxxii. 33, Job xxx. 21, Prov. v. 9, xi. 17, xii. 10, xvii. 11, xxvii. 4, Isa. xiii. 9, Jer. vi. 23, l. 42, xxx. 14; and *fierce* in Job xli. 10. Jerome renders it, *mutatus mihi in crudelem*—"thou art changed so as to become cruel to me;" the LXX render it, ἀνέλεμόνως—*unmerciful*; Luther, Du bist mir verwandelt in einem Grausamen—"thou art changed to me into a cruel one;" and so Umbreit, Noyes, and translators generally. Perhaps the word *fierce*, *severe*, or *harsh*, would express the idea; still it must be admitted that Job, in the severity of his sufferings, is often betrayed into language which cannot be a model for us, and which we cannot vindicate. ¶ *With thy strong hand.* Marg. *the strength.* So the Hebrew. The *hand* is the instrument by which we accomplish anything; and hence anything which God does is traced to his *hand*. ¶ *Thou opposest thyself against me*—אֶתְּכַחֵם.

The word סָתַם—*Sâtam*, means to lie in wait for any one; to lay snares; to set a trap. See ch. xvi. 9, where the same word occurs, and where it is rendered "who *hateth* me," but where it would be better rendered, *he pursues*, or *persecutes* me. The meaning is, that God had become his adversary, or had set himself against him. There was a severity in his dealings with him, as if he had become a foe.

22. *Thou liftest me up to the wind.* The sense here is, that he was lifted up as stubble is by a tempest, and driven mercilessly along. The figure of riding upon the wind or the whirlwind, is

common in Oriental writers, and, indeed, elsewhere. So Milton says,

"They ride the air in whirlwind."

So Addison, speaking of the angel that executes the commands of the Almighty, says,

"Rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm."

Coverdale renders this verse, "In times past thou didst set me up on high, as it were above the wind, but now hast thou given me a very sore fall." Rosenmüller thinks that the image here is not taken from straw or chaff that is driven by the wind, but that the meaning of Job is, that he is lifted up and borne aloft like a cloud. But the image of chaff or straw taken up by the whirlwind and driven about, seems best to accord with the scope of the passage. The idea is, that the tempest of calamity had swept everything away, and had driven him about as a worthless object, until he was wasted away and ruined. It is possible that Job refers in this passage to the *sand-storm* which occurs sometimes in the deserts of Arabia. The following description of such a storm, by Mr. Bruce (vol. iv. pp. 553, 554), will furnish an illustration of the force and sublimity of the passage. It is copied from Taylor's *Fragments*, in Calmet's *Dictionary*, vol. iii. 235: "On the fourteenth," says Bruce, "at seven in the morning, we left Assa Nagga, our course being due north. At one o'clock we alighted among some acacia trees at Waadi el Halboub, having gone twenty-one miles. We were here at once surprised and terrified by a sight, surely one of the most magnificent in the world. In that vast expanse of desert from west and to north-west of us, we saw a number of prodigious *pillars of sand* at different distances, at times *moving with great celerity*, at others stalking on with a majestic slowness; at intervals we thought they were coming in a very few minutes to overwhelm us, and small quantities of sand did actually more than once reach us. Again they would retreat so as to be almost out of sight—their tops *reaching to the very clouds*.

There the tops often separated from the bodies; and these, once disjoined, *dispersed in the air*, and did not appear more. Sometimes they were broken near the middle, as if struck with a large cannon shot. About noon they began to advance with considerable swiftness upon us, the wind being very strong at north. Eleven of them ranged alongside of us about the distance of three miles. The greatest diameter of the largest appeared to me at that distance as if it would measure two feet. They retired from us with a wind at south-east, leaving an impression upon my mind to which I can give no name, though surely one ingredient in it was fear, with a considerable deal of wonder and astonishment. It was in vain to think of flying; the swiftest horse, or fastest sailing ship, could be of no use to carry us out of this danger, and the full persuasion of this riveted me as if to the spot where I stood, and let the camels gain on me so much in my state of lameness, that it was with some difficulty I could overtake them.

"The whole of our company were much disheartened, except Idris, and imagined that they were advancing into whirlwinds of moving sand, from which they should never be able to extricate themselves; but before four o'clock in the afternoon these phantoms of the plain had all of them fallen to the ground and disappeared. In the evening, we came to Waadi Dimokea, where we passed the night, much disheartened, and our fear more increased, when we found, upon waking in the morning, that one side was perfectly buried in the sand that the wind had blown above us in the night.

"The sun shining through the pillars, which were thicker, and contained more sand, apparently, than any of the preceding days, seemed to give those nearest us an appearance as if spotted with stars of gold. I do not think at any time they seemed to be nearer than two miles. The most remarkable circumstance was, that the sand seemed to keep in that vast circular space, surrounded by the Nile on our left, in going round by Chaigie toward Dougola

23 For I know *that* thou wilt bring me *to* death, and *to* the

and seldom was observed much to the eastward of a meridian, passing along the Nile through the Magizan, before it takes that turn; whereas the simoom was always on the opposite side of our course, coming upon us from the south-east.

"The same appearance of moving pillars of sand presented themselves to us this day in form and disposition like those we had seen at Waadi Halboub, only they seemed to be more in number, and less in size. They came several times in a direction close upon us, that is, I believe, within less than two miles. They began, immediately after sunrise, like a thick wood, and almost darkened the sun; his rays shining through them for near an hour, gave them an appearance of pillars of fire."

"If my conjecture," says Taylor, "be admissible, we now see a magnificence in this imagery, not apparent before: we see how Job's dignity might be exalted in the air; might rise to great grandeur, importance, and even terror, in the sight of beholders; might ride upon the wind, which bears it about, causing it to advance, or to recede; and, after all, when the wind diminishes, might disperse, dissipate, melt this pillar of sand into the undistinguished level of the desert. This comparison seems to be precisely adapted to the mind of an Arab; who must have seen, or have been informed of, similar phenomena in the countries around him." ¶ *And dissolvest my substance.* Marg., or *wisdom*. The word rendered "*dissolvest*," means to melt, to flow down, and then, to cause to melt, to cause to pine away and perish. Isa. lxiv. 6. It is applied to a host or an army that appears to melt away. 1 Sam. xiv. 16. It is also applied to one who seems to melt away with fear and terror. Ex. xv. 15; Josh. ii. 9, 24. Here the meaning probably is, that God caused Job to melt away, as it were, with terrors and alarms. He was like one caught up in a whirlwind, and driven along with the storm, and who, in such circumstances, would be dissolved with fear. The word

house appointed \* for all living.

g Ge. 3. 19.

rendered *substance* (חֵם) has been very variously interpreted. The word, as it is written in the text, means help, deliverance, purpose, enterprise, counsel, or understanding. See ch. v. 12; vi. 13; xi. 6. But by some, and among others, Gesenius, Umbreit, and Noyes, it is supposed that it should be read as a verb, חָשָׂה from חָזַץ—to fear. According to this, the meaning is, "thou terrifiest me." This agrees better with the connexion; is more abrupt and emphatic, and is, probably, the true interpretation.

23. *For I know that thou wilt bring me to death.* This is the language of despair. Occasionally Job seems to have had an assurance that his calamities would pass by, and that God would show himself to be his friend on earth (comp. Notes on ch. xix. 25, seq.), and at other times he utters the language of despair. Such would be commonly the case with a good man afflicted as he was, and agitated with alternate hopes and fears. We are not to set these expressions down as contradictions. All that inspiration is responsible for, is the fair record of his feelings; and that he should have alternate hopes and fears is in entire accordance with what occurs when we are afflicted. Here the view of his sorrows appears to have been so overwhelming, that he says he *knew* they must terminate in death. The phrase "to death" means to the house of the dead, or to the place where the dead are. Umbreit. ¶ *And to the house appointed for all living.* The grave. Comp. Heb. ix. 27. That house or home is "appointed" for all. It is not a matter of chance that we come there, but it is because the Great Arbiter of life has so ordained. What an affecting consideration it should be, that *such* a house is designated for all! A house so dark, so gloomy, so solitary, so repulsive! For all that sit on thrones; for all that move in the halls of music and pleasure; for all that roll along in splendid carriages; for all the beautiful, the gay, the vigorous, the manly; for all in the marts of business, in the low

24 Howbeit he will not stretch out *his* hand to the <sup>1</sup> grave, though they cry in his destruction.

<sup>1</sup> *heap.*

scenes of dissipation, and in the sanctuary of God; for every one who is young, and every one who is aged, this is the home! Here they come at last; and here they lie down in the narrow bed! God's hand will bring them all there; and there will they lie till his voice summons them to judgment!

24. *Howbeit he will not stretch out his hand to the grave.* Marg., *heap*. In our common version this verse conveys no very clear idea, and it is quite evident that our translators despaired of giving it a consistent sense, and attempted merely to translate it literally. The verse has been rendered by every expositor almost in his own way; and though almost no two of them agree, yet it is remarkable that the versions given are all beautiful, and furnish a sense that agrees well with the scope of the passage. The Vulgate renders it, "But not to their consumption wilt thou send forth thy hand; and if they fall, thou wilt save them." The Sept., "For O that I could lay violent hands on myself, or beseech another, and he would do it for me." Luther renders it, "Yet he shall not stretch out the hand to the charnel-house, and they shall not cry before his destruction." Noyes:

"When he stretcheth out his hand, prayer  
availeth nothing;  
When he bringeth destruction, vain is the  
cry for help."

Umbreit renders it:

"Nur mög' er nicht an den zerstörten Haufen  
Hand anlegen!  
Oder müssen jene selbst in ihrem Tode  
schreien?"

"Only if he would not lay his hand upon the  
heaps of the destroyed!  
Or must these also cry out in their death?"

According to this interpretation, Job speaks here in bitter irony. "I would gladly die," says he, "if God would only suffer me to be quiet when I am dead." He would be willing that the edifice of the body should be taken down, provided the ruins might rest in peace. Rosenmüller gives the same

sense as that expressed by Noyes. Amidst this variety of interpretation, it is by no means easy to determine on the true meaning of the passage. The principal difficulty in the exposition lies in the word  $\text{חָבֵי}$ , rendered in the text "in the grave," and the margin 'heap.' If that word is compounded of the preposition  $\text{בְּ}$  and  $\text{חָבֵי}$ , it means literally, "in ruins, or in rubbish"—for so the word  $\text{חָבֵי}$  is used in Mic. 1. 6; Jer. xxvi. 18; Mic. iii. 12; Ps. lxxix. 1; Num. xxxiii. 45. But Gesenius supposes it to be a single word, from the obsolete root  $\text{חָבַי}$ , Chaldee  $\text{חָבַי}$ , *to pray, to petition*; and according to this the meaning is, "Yea, prayer is nought when he stretches out his hand; and in his [God's] destruction, their cry avail-eth not." Prof. Lee understands the word ( $\text{חָבֵי}$ ) in the same sense, but gives a somewhat different meaning to the whole passage. According to him the meaning is, "Nevertheless, upon prayer thou wilt not lay thine hand; surely, when he destroyeth, in this alone there is safety." Schultens accords very nearly in the sentiment expressed by Umbreit, and renders it, "Yet not even in the tomb would he relax his hand, if in its destruction an alleviation were there." This sentiment is very strong, and borders on impiety, and should not be adopted if it is possible to avoid it. It looks as if Job felt that God was disposed to pursue his animosity even into the regions of the dead, and that he would have pleasure in carrying on the work of destruction and affliction in the ruins of the grave. After the most careful examination which I have been able to give of this difficult passage, it seems probable to me that the following is the correct sense. Job means to state a general and important principle—that there was *rest* in the grave. He said he knew that God would bring him down there, but that would be a state of repose. The hand of God producing pain, would not reach there, nor would

25 Did not I weep for him that was <sup>1</sup> in trouble? was *not* my soul grieved for the poor?

26 When <sup>h</sup> I looked for good, then evil came *unto me*: and

<sup>1</sup> *hard of day.*

<sup>h</sup> Je. 8. 15.

the sorrows experienced in this world be felt there, provided there had been a praying life. Notwithstanding all his afflictions, therefore, and his certain conviction that he would die, he had unwavering confidence in God. Agreeably to this, the following paraphrase will convey the true sense. "I know that he will bring me to the grave. Nevertheless (נָסָה) over the ruins (בָּקֵי)—of my body, the ruins in the grave—he will not stretch out his hand—to afflict me there, or to pursue those who lie there with calamity and judgment; if in his destruction (בְּקִשָּׁה)—in the destruction or desolation which God brings upon men—among them (לִהֵן)—among those who are thus consigned to the ruins of the grave—there is prayer

if there has been supplication offered to him, or a cry for mercy has gone up before him." This paraphrase embraces every word of the original; saves the necessity of attempting to change the text, as has been often done, and gives a meaning which accords with the scope of the passage, and with the uniform belief of Job, that God would ultimately vindicate him, and show that he himself was right in his government.

25. *Did not I weep, &c.* Job here appeals to his former life, and says that it had been a characteristic of his life to manifest compassion to the afflicted and the poor. His *object* in doing this is, evidently, to show how remarkable it was that he was so much afflicted. "Did I deserve," the sense is, "such a hard lot? Has it been brought on me by my own fault, or as a punishment for a life where no compassion was shown to others?" So far from it, he says that his whole life had been distinguished for tender compassion for those in distress and want. ¶ *In trouble.*

when I waited for light, there came darkness.

27 My bowels boiled, and rested not: the days of affliction prevented me.

Marg., as in Hebrew, *hard of day.* So we say, "a man has a hard time of it," or has a hard lot.

26. *When I looked for good.* When I supposed that respect would be shown me; or when I looked forward to an honored old age. I expected to be made happy and prosperous through life, as the result of my uprightness and benevolence; but, instead of that, calamity came and swept all my comforts away. He experienced the instability which most men are called to experience, and the divine dealings with him showed that no reliance could be placed on confident plans of happiness in this life.

27. *My bowels boiled.* Or rather, My bowels boil—for he refers to his present circumstances, and not to the past. It is clear that by this phrase he designs to describe deep affliction. The bowels, in the Scriptures, are represented as the seat of the affections. By this is meant the *upper* bowels, or the region of the heart and the lungs. The reason is, that deep emotions of the mind are felt there. The heart beats quick; or it is heavy and pained; or it seems to melt within us in the exercise of pity or compassion. Comp. Notes on Isa. xvi. 11. The idea here is, that the seat of sorrow and of grief was affected by his calamities. Nor was the feeling slight. His emotions he compared with agitated, boiling water. It is possible that there is an allusion here to the inflammatory nature of his disease, producing internal heat and pain; but it is more probable that he refers to the mental anguish which he endured. ¶ *The days of affliction prevented me.* Literally, 'have anticipated me'—for so the word *prevent* was formerly used, and so it is uniformly used in the Bible. Notes on Job iii. 12. Comp. Ps. lix. 10, lxxix. 8, lxxxviii. 13, cxix. 148;

28 I went mourning without the sun: I stood up, *and* I cried in the congregation.

1 Thess. iv. 15. There is in the Hebrew word (קָדַם) the idea that days of anguish came in an unexpected manner, or that they anticipated the fulfilment of his plans. All his schemes and hopes of life had been *anticipated* by these overwhelming sorrows.

28. *I went mourning.* Or rather, 'I go,' in the present tense, for he is now referring to his present calamities, and not to what was past. The word rendered '*mourning*,' however (רָדַד), means here rather to be dark, dingy, *tanned*. It literally means to be foul or turbid, like a torrent, Job vi. 16; then to go about in filthy garments, as they do who mourn, Job v. 11; Jer. xiv. 2; then to be dusky, or of a dark color, or to become dark. Thus it is applied to the sun and moon becoming dark in an eclipse, or when covered with clouds, Jer. iv. 28; Joel ii. 10, iv. 15; Mic. iii. 6. Here it refers to the fact that, by the mere force of his disease, his skin had become dark and swarthy, though he had not become exposed to the burning rays of the sun. The wrath of God had *burned* upon him, and he had become black under it. Jerome, however, renders it *marens*, mourning. The LXX, "I go groaning (στένων) without restraint, or limit"—ἀνευ φειμῶν. The Chaldee translates it אַחֵם, *black*. ¶ *Without the sun.* Without being exposed to the sun; or without the agency of the sun. Though not exposed, he had become as dark as if he had been a day-laborer exposed to a burning sun. ¶ *I stood up.* Or, I stand up. ¶ *And I cried in the congregation.* I utter my cries in the congregation, or when surrounded by the assembled people. Once I stood up to counsel them, and they hung upon my lips for advice; now I stand up only to weep over my accumulated calamities. This indicates the great change which had come upon him, and the depth of his sorrows. A man will weep readily in private; but he will be slow to do it,

29 I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to <sup>1</sup> owls.

<sup>1</sup> or, *ostriches*.

if he can avoid it, when surrounded by a multitude.

29. *I am a brother to dragons.* That is, my loud complaints and cries resemble the doleful screams of wild animals, or of the most frightful monsters. The word 'brother' is often used in this sense, to denote *similarity* in any respect. The word *dragons* here (תַּנִּים, *tānim*) denotes properly a sea-monster, a great fish, a crocodile; or the fancied animal with wings called a dragon. See Notes on Isa. xiii. 22. Gesenius, Umbreit, and Noyes, render this word here *jackals*—an animal between a dog and a fox, or a wolf and a fox; an animal that abounds in deserts and solitudes, and that makes a doleful cry in the night. So the Syriac renders it

ܕܡܝܬܐ—an animal resembling a dog; a wild dog. *Castell*. This idea agrees with the scope of the passage better than the common reference to a sea-monster or a crocodile. "The *Deeb*, or *Jackal*," says Shaw, "is of a darker color than the fox, and about the same bigness. It yelps every night about the gardens and villages, feeding upon roots, fruit, and carrion." *Travels*, p. 247, Ed. Oxford, 1738. That some wild animal, distinguished for a mournful noise, or howl, is meant, is evident; and the passage better agrees with the description of a jackal than the hissing of a serpent or the noise of the crocodile. Bochart supposes that the allusion is to dragons, because they erect their heads, and their jaws are drawn open, and they *seem* to be complaining against God on account of their humble and miserable condition. Taylor (Concord) supposes it means jackals or *thoes*, and refers to the following places where the word may be so used. Ps. xlv. 19; Isa. xiii. 22, xxxiv. 13, xxxv. 7, xliii. 20; Jer. ix. 11, x. 22, xlix. 13, li. 37; Lam. iv. 3; Mic. i. 8; Mal. i. 3. ¶ *And a companion to owls.* Marg., *ostriches*. The word *companion* here is used in a



30 My skin<sup>1</sup> is black upon me,  
and my bones are burned with heat.

<sup>1</sup> La. 4. 8. 5. 10.

sense similar to *brother* in the other member of the parallelism, to denote resemblance. The Hebrew, here rendered *owls*, is, literally, *daughters of answering*, or *clamor*—בנות יענה. The name is given on account of the plaintive and mournful cry which is made.

Bochart. Gesenius supposes, however, that it is on account of its greediness and gluttony. The name 'daughters of the ostrich' denotes properly the female ostrich. The phrase is, however, put for the ostrich of both sexes in many places. See Gesenius on the word יענה. Comp. Notes on Isa. xiii.

21. For a full examination on the meaning of the phrase, see Bochart, Hieroz. P. ii. L. 2. cap. xiv. pp. 218-231. See also ch. xxxix. 13-17. There can be little doubt that the ostrich is here intended, and Job means to say that his mourning resembled the doleful noise made by the ostrich in the lonely desert. Shaw, in his Travels, says that during the night "they [the ostriches] make very doleful and hideous noises; which would sometimes be like the roaring of a lion; at other times it would bear a nearer resemblance to the hoarser voice of other quadrupeds, particularly of the bull and the ox. I have often heard them groan as if they were in the greatest agonies."

30. *My skin is black upon me.* See ver. 28. It had become black by the force of the disease. ¶ *My bones are*

31 My harp also is *turned* to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.

*burned with heat.* The bones, in the Scriptures, are often represented as the seat of pain. The disease of Job seems to have pervaded the whole body. If it was the elephantiasis (see Notes on ch. ii. 7, 8), these effects would be naturally produced.

31. *My harp also is turned to mourning.* What formerly gave cheerful sounds, now gives only notes of plain-tiveness and lamentation. The harp was probably an instrument originally designed to give sounds of joy. For a description of it, see Notes on Isa. v. 12. ¶ *And my organ.* The form of what is here called the *organ*, is not certainly known. The word נבל is doubtless from נָפַח, to breathe, to blow; and most probably the instrument here intended was the *pipe*. For a description of it, see Notes on Isa. v. 12. This instrument, also, was played, as would appear, on joyous occasions, but Job now says it was turned to grief. All that had been joyous with him had fled. His honor was taken away; his friends were gone; they who had treated him with reverence now stood at a distance, or treated him with contempt; his health was departed, and his former appearance, indicating a station of affluence, was changed for the dark complexion produced by disease, and the instruments of joyousness now gave forth only notes of sorrow.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

This chapter finishes the reply of Job, and closes the argument. Zophar should have answered in his turn, but he is silent, and the cause is then taken up by Elihu. The chapter is a beautiful vindication of the private life of Job. It is not to be regarded as uttered in the spirit of boasting or self-confidence, but as made necessary by the accusations of his friends. They had charged him with crimes of an aggravated character, and they regarded his sufferings as full proof that he was a wicked man. In ch. xxix. he had spoken of his *public* life—his character as an Emir or magistrate, and of the honor that was shown him in that capacity; and in

this chapter he goes into a detail of the principles on which his private conduct was regulated, and maintains his integrity in regard to his conduct there. While his main design was to meet the charges of his friends, it cannot be denied that there is an *implied* reflection on the dealings of God, is if they were severe and harsh. See vs. 35—37. But the picture which he has drawn of himself is exquisitely beautiful. Nothing can surpass it as a moral painting; and whatever may be thought of the propriety of his dwelling on the virtues of his own private life in the manner in which he here does, the description is a fine illustration of what was regarded in the patriarchal times as constituting true piety, and of the nature of true piety in all ages and lands.

The plan of the chapter is to specify certain of the leading virtues of piety, and to deny that he had been guilty of violating any of them, and to imprecate appropriate punishment on himself if he had been guilty. The following is a summary of the virtues specified.

(1.) *Chastity*, vs. 1—4. He says that he had so conscientiously adhered to that virtue, that he did not even allow himself to look on a maid, ver. 1. He knew that God would punish this sin, ver. 3; he knew that his eye saw all his ways, ver. 4.

(2.) *Seriousness and sincerity of life*, vs. 5, 6. He says that he had not walked in a vain and deceitful manner, ver. 5, and asks that he might on this subject be weighed in an even balance, ver. 6.

(3.) *Uprightness and purity of life*, vs. 7, 8. He says that his steps had not been turned out of the way, and that no stain cleaved to his hands, ver. 7; if there did, he asked that he might be compelled to sow while another reaped, and that his off-spring might be rooted out, ver. 8.

(4.) *Fidelity to the marriage vow*, vs. 9—12. He affirms that his heart had not been allured by a woman, and that he had not attempted to destroy the peace of his neighbor by seducing his wife, ver. 9. If such a fault should be found against him, he consented that his own wife should be made to serve others in the most menial capacity, ver. 10. He adds, with peculiar emphasis, and in a manner that shows his sense of the magnitude of such an offence, that this was a crime which ought to be punished by the judges, and that it was a fire which consumed to destruction, vs. 11, 12.

(5.) *Fidelity to his servants*, vs. 13—15. He affirms that he had not been guilty of injustice or unkindness to either his man-servant or maid-servant, ver. 13. He says that he well knew that if he had been, he could not answer God when he should call him to judgment, ver. 14, for the same God had made him and them, ver. 15.

(6.) *Benevolence towards the poor, the widow, and the fatherless*, vs. 16—23. He says that if he had been guilty of neglecting them; if he had caused the widow to weep, or had eaten his morsel alone, or had refused to clothe the naked, or to vindicate the cause of the fatherless, he was willing that his arm should fall from his shoulder-blade.

(7.) *Freedom from idolatry*, vs. 24—28. He had not put his trust in gold, nor had he worshipped the sun or the moon, vs. 24—27. He says that that would have been an offence that should be punished by the judge, for he would have denied the God above, ver. 28.

(8.) *Kindness to his enemies*, vs. 29, 30. He had not rejoiced in their destruction, nor had he allowed his mouth to imprecate a curse on them.

(9.) *Hospitality*, vs. 31, 32. Even those that dwelt in his tent had been constrained to express their admiration at his hospitality, and he had not suffered the stranger to lodge in the street, nor refused to open his doors to the traveller.

(10.) *Freedom from secret sins*, vs. 33—37. He had not attempted to conceal his offences, nor to cloak them, by hiding them in his bosom, vs. 33, 34. Here he could boldly make his appeal to God, and wished that the record were made, and that all his thoughts, motives, and plans were recorded. He says that it would be such a perfect vindication of his innocence, that he would take it triumphantly on his shoulder and bind it as a diadem on his head, vs. 35—37.

(11.) *Honesty towards others in the purchase and use of land*, vs. 38—40. He says that he had not seized upon the land of others by violence, or cultivated it without paying for its use, so that the land itself could not cry out against him, vs. 38, 39. If he had, he asked that on his own land thistles might spring up instead of wheat, and cockles instead of barley. Having thus asserted his integrity, he said that he was done. He regarded his character as vindicated, and he had no more to say.

**I MADE** a covenant with mine eyes; a why then should I think  
b upon a maid?

a Matt. 5. 28.

b Pr. 6. 25.

1. *I made a covenant with mine eyes.* The first virtue of his private life to which Job refers is chastity. Such was his sense of the importance of this, and of the danger to which man was exposed, that he had solemnly resolved not to think upon a young female. The

phrase here, "I made a covenant with mine eyes," is poetical, meaning that he *solemnly resolved*. A covenant is of a sacred and binding nature; and the strength of his resolution was as great as if he had made a solemn compact. A covenant or compact was usually made

2 For what portion of God is *there* from above? and *what* inheritance of the Almighty from on high?

by slaying an animal in sacrifice, and the compact was ratified over the animal that was slain, by a kind of imprecation that if the compact was violated the same destruction might fall on the violators which fell on the head of the victim. This idea of *cutting up a victim* on occasion of making a covenant, is retained in most languages. So the Greek ὅρκια τέμνειν, τέμνειν σπονδάς, and the Latin *icere fœdus*—to strike a league, in allusion to the striking down, or slaying of an animal on the occasion. And so the Hebrew, as in the place before us, קָרַח קָרַח—to cut a covenant, from cutting down, or cutting in pieces the victim over which the covenant was made. See this explained at length in the Notes on Heb. ix. 16. By the language here, Job means that he had resolved, in the most solemn manner, that he would not allow his eyes or thoughts to endanger him by improperly contemplating a woman. ¶ *Why then should I think upon a maid?* Upon a virgin—עַל-בְּתוּלָה. Comp. Prov. vi. 25, "Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids." See, also, the fearful and solemn declaration of the Saviour in Matt. v. 28. There is much emphasis in the expression used here by Job. He does not merely say that he *had not* thought in that manner, but that the thing was morally impossible that he *should have done it*. Any charge of that kind, or any suspicion of it, he would repel with indignation. His purpose to lead a pure life, and to keep a pure heart, had been so settled, that it was *impossible* that he could have offended in that respect. His purpose, also, not to *think* on this subject, showed the extent of the restriction imposed on himself. It was not merely his intention to lead a chaste life, and to avoid open sin, but it was to maintain a pure heart, and not to suffer the mind to be-

3 *Is not destruction to the wicked?* and a strange *punishment* to the workers of iniquity?

come corrupted by dwelling on impure images, or indulging in unholy desires. This strongly shows Job's piety and purity of heart, and is a beautiful illustration of patriarchal religion. We may remark here, that if a man wishes to maintain purity of life, he must make just such a covenant as this with himself—one so sacred, so solemn, so firm, that he will not suffer his mind for a moment to harbor an improper thought. "The very passage of an impure thought through the mind leaves pollution behind it;" and the outbreaking crimes of life are just the result of allowing the imagination to dwell on impure images. As the eye is the great source of danger (comp. Matt. v. 28; 2 Peter ii. 14), there should be a solemn purpose that *that* should be pure, and that any sacrifice should be made rather than allow indulgence to a wanton gaze. Comp. Mark ix. 47. No man was ever too much guarded on this subject; no one ever yet made too solemn a covenant with his eyes, and with his whole soul, to be chaste.

2. *For what portion of God is there from above?* Or, rather, "What portion should I then have from God who reigns above?" Job asks with emphasis, what portion or reward he should expect from God who reigns on high, if he had *not* made such a covenant with his eyes, and if he had given the reins to loose and wanton thoughts? This question he himself answers in the following verse, and says, that he could have expected only destruction from the Almighty.

3. *Is not destruction to the wicked?* That is, Job says that he was well aware that destruction would overtake the wicked, and that if he had given indulgence to impure desires he could have looked for nothing else. Well knowing this, he says he had guarded himself in the most careful manner from sin, and

4 Doth <sup>c</sup> not he see my ways,  
and count all my steps?

5 If <sup>d</sup> I have walked with  
vanity, or if my foot hath hasted

c Jno. 1. 48. Je. 32. 19.

d Ps. 44. 20, 21.

had labored with the greatest assiduity to keep his eyes and his heart pure. ¶ *And a strange punishment*—נִקְּבָה. The word here used, means literally *strangeness*—a strange thing, something with which we were unacquainted. It is used here evidently in the sense of a strange or unusual punishment; something which does not occur in the ordinary course of events. The sense is, that for the sin here particularly referred to, God would interpose to inflict vengeance in a manner such as did not occur in the ordinary dealings of his providence. There would be some punishment adapted peculiarly to *this* sin, and which would mark it with his *especial* displeasure. Has it not been so in all ages? The Vulgate renders it, *alienatio*, and the LXX in a similar manner — ἀπαλλοτριώσις — and they seem to have understood it as followed by *entire alienation* from God; an idea which would be everywhere sustained by a reference to the history of the sin referred to by Job. There is no sin that so much poisons all the fountains of pure feeling in the soul, and none that will so certainly terminate in the entire wreck of character.

4. *Doth not he see my ways.* This either means that God was a witness of all that he did—his thoughts, words, and deeds, and would punish him if he had given indulgence to improper feelings and thoughts; or that since God saw all his thoughts, he could boldly appeal to him as a witness of his innocence in this matter, and in proof that his life and heart were pure. Rosenmüller adopts the latter interpretation; Herder seems to incline to the former. Umbreit renders it, “God himself must be a witness that I speak the truth.” It is not easy to determine which is the true meaning. Either of them will accord well with the scope of the passage.

to deceit;

6 Let <sup>1</sup> me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity.

<sup>1</sup> *him weigh me in balances of justice.*

5. *If I have walked with vanity.* This is the second specification in regard to his private deportment. He says that his life had been sincere, upright, honest. The word *vanity* here is equivalent to *falsehood*, for so the parallelism demands, and so the word (κῆψ) is often used. Ps. xii. 3; xli. 7; Ex. xxiii. 1; Deut. v. 17. Comp. Isa. i. 13. The meaning of Job here is, that he had been true and honest. In his dealings with others he had not defrauded them; he had not misrepresented things; he had spoken the exact truth, and had done that which was without deception or guile. ¶ *If my foot hath hasted to deceit.* That is, if I have gone to execute a purpose of deceit or fraud. He had never, on seeing an opportunity where others might be defrauded, *hastened* to embrace it. The LXX render this verse, “If I have walked with scoffers — μετὰ γελοιαστῶν—and if my foot has hastened to deceit.”

6. *Let me be weighed in an even balance.* Marg., *him weigh me in balances of justice.* That is, let him ascertain exactly my character, and treat me accordingly. If on trial it be found that I am guilty in this respect, I consent to be punished accordingly. Scales or balances are often used as emblematic of justice. Many suppose, however, that this verse is a parenthesis, and that the imprecation in verse 8 relates to verse 5, as well as to verse 7. But most probably the meaning is, that he consented to have his life tried in this respect in the most exact and rigid manner, and was willing to abide the result. A man may express such a consciousness of integrity in his dealings with others, without any improper self-reliance or boasting. It may be a simple fact of which he may be certain, that he has never meant to defraud any man.

7 If my step hath turned out of the way, and mine heart <sup>c</sup> walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands;

8 *Then* let me sow, and let another eat; yea, let my offspring

<sup>c</sup> Eze. 14. 3, 7.

7. *If my step hath turned out of the way.* The path in which I ought to walk—the path of virtue. ¶ *And mine heart walked after mine eyes.* That is, if I have coveted what my eyes have beheld; or if I have been determined by the appearance of things rather than by what is right, I consent to bear the appropriate punishment. ¶ *And if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands.* To have clean hands is emblematic of innocence. Job xvii. 9; Ps. xxiv. 4. Comp. Matt. xxvii. 24. The word *blot* here, means *stain*, *blemish*. Dan. i. 4. The idea is, that his hands were pure, and that he had not been guilty of any act of fraud or violence in depriving others of their property.

8. *Then let me sow, and let another eat.* This is the imprecation which he invokes, in case he had been guilty in this respect. He consented to sow his fields and let others enjoy the harvest. The expression here used is common in the Scriptures to denote insecurity of property or calamity in general. See Lev. xxvi. 16: "And ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it." Comp. Deut. xxviii. 30; Amos ix. 13, 14. ¶ *Yea, let my offspring be rooted out.* Or, rather, "Let what I plant be rooted up." So Umbreit, Noyes, Schultens, Rosenmüller, Herder, and Lee understand it. There is no evidence that he here alludes to his children, for the connexion does not demand it, nor does the word used here require such an interpretation. The word <sup>צֶמַח</sup>—means, properly, *shoots*; that is, what springs out of any thing—as the earth, or a tree—from <sup>אֶרֶץ</sup>—to go out, to go forth. It is applied to the productions of the earth in Isa. xlii. 5, xxxiv. 1, and to children or posterity,

be rooted out.

9 If mine heart have been deceived by a woman; or *if* I have laid wait at my neighbour's door;

10 *Then* let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her.

in Isa. xxii. 24, lxi. 9, lxv. 23; Job v. 25, xxi. 8. Here 'it refers evidently to the productions of the earth; and the idea is, that if he had been guilty of dishonesty or fraud in his dealings, he wished that all that he had sowed should be rooted up.

9. *If mine heart have been deceived by a woman.* If I have been enticed by her beauty. The word rendered *deceived* (<sup>הָפַת</sup>) means, *to open*, *to expand*. It is then applied to that which is open or ingenuous; to that which is unsuspecting—like a youth; and thence is used in the sense of being deceived, or enticed. Deut. xi. 16; Ex. xxii. 15; Prov. i. 10, xvi. 29. The word "woman" here probably means a married woman, and stands opposed to "virgin" in ver. 1. The crime which he here disclaims is adultery, and he says that his heart had never been allured from conjugal fidelity by the charms or the arts of a woman. ¶ *Or if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door.* That is, to watch when he would be absent from home. This was a common practice with those who were guilty of the crime referred to here. Comp. Prov. vii. 8, 9.

10. *Then let my wife grind unto another.* Let her be subjected to the deepest humiliation and degradation. Probably Job could not have found language which would have more emphatically expressed his sense of the enormity of this crime, or his perfect consciousness of innocence. The last thing which a man would imprecate on himself, would be that which is specified in this verse. The word *grind* (<sup>טָרַח</sup>) means to crush, to beat small; then to grind as in a hand-mill. Judges xvi. 21; Num. xi. 8. This was usually

11 For this is an heinous crime; yea, it is <sup>f</sup> an iniquity to be punished by the judges.

*f* Le. 20. 10.

the work of females and slaves. See Notes on Isa. xlvii. 2. The meaning here is, "Let my wife be the mill-wench to another; be his abject slave, and be treated by him with the deepest indignity." This passage has been understood by many in a different sense, which the parallelism might seem to demand, but which is not necessarily the true interpretation. The sense referred to is this: Cogatur uxor mea ad patiendum alius concubitum, ut verbum molendi hoc loco eodem sensu sumatur, quo non raro a Latinis usurpatur, ut in illo Horatii (Satyr. L. i. Ecl. ii. ver. 35), *alienas permolere uxores*. In this sense the Rabbinic writers understand Judges xvi. 21, and Lam. v. 13. So also the Chaldee renders the phrase before us, *coëat cum alio uxor mea*; and so the LXX seem to have understood it—ἀπέσαι ἀπα καὶ ἡ γυνή μου ἐτρέφω. But probably Job meant merely that his wife should be reduced to the condition of servitude, and be compelled to labor in the employ of another. We may find here an answer to the opinion of Prof. Lee (in his Notes on ver. 1), that the wife of Job was at this time dead, and that he was meditating the question about marrying again. May we not here also find an instance of the fidelity and forgiving spirit of Job towards a wife who is represented in the early part of this book as manifesting few qualities which could win the heart of a husband? There is no expression of impatience at her temper and her words on the part of Job, and he here speaks of it as the most serious of all calamities that could happen; the most painful of all punishments, that that same wife should be reduced to a condition of servitude and degradation.

11. For this is an heinous crime. This expresses Job's sense of the enormity of such an offence. He felt that there was no palliation for it; he would in no way, and on no pretence, attempt

12 For it is a fire that consumeth to destruction, <sup>s</sup> and would root out all mine increase.

*g* Mal. 3. 5. He. 13. 4.

to vindicate it. ¶ An iniquity to be punished by the judges. A crime for the judges to determine on and decide. The sins which Job had specified before this were those of the heart; but here he refers to a crime against society—an offence which deserved the interposition of the magistrate. It may be observed here, that adultery has always been regarded as a sin "to be punished by the judges." In most countries it has been punished with death. See Notes on John viii. 5.

12. For it is a fire that consumeth to destruction. This may mean that such an offence would be a crime that would provoke God to send destruction, like a consuming fire, upon the offender (*Rosenmüller* and *Noyes*), or more likely it is designed to be descriptive of the nature of the sin itself. According to this, the meaning is, that indulgence in this sin tends wholly to ruin and destroy a man. It is like a consuming fire, which sweeps away everything before it. It is destructive to the body, the morals, the soul. Accordingly, it may be remarked that there is no one vice which pours such desolation through the soul as licentiousness. See *Rush* on the Diseases of the Mind. It corrupts and taints all the fountains of morals, and utterly annihilates all purity of the heart. An intelligent gentleman, and a careful observer of the state of things in society, once remarked to me, that on coming to the city of Philadelphia, it was his fortune to be in the same boarding-house with a number of young men, nearly all of whom were known to him to be of licentious habits. He has lived to watch their course of life; and he remarked, that there was not one of them who did not ultimately show that he was essentially corrupt and unprincipled in every department of morals. There is not any one propensity of man that spreads such a withering influence over the soul as this; and, however it may be ac-

13 If I did despise the cause of my manservant, or of my maidservant, when they contended with me;

14 What then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he

counted for, it is certain that indulgence in this vice is a certain evidence that the whole soul is corrupt, and that no reliance is to be placed on the man's virtue in any respect, or in reference to any relation of life. ¶ *And would root out all mine increase.* By its desolating effects on my heart and life. The meaning is, that it would utterly ruin him. Comp. Luke xv. 13, 30. How many a wretched sensualist can bear testimony to the truth of this statement! How many a young man has been wholly ruined in reference to his worldly interests, as well as in reference to his soul, by this vice! Comp. Prov. vii. No young man could do a better service to himself than to commit the whole of that chapter to memory, and so engrave it on his soul that it never could be forgotten.

13. *If I did despise the cause of my manservant.* Job turns to another subject, on which he claimed that his life had been upright. It was in reference to the treatment of his servants. The meaning here is, "I never refused to do strict justice to my servants when they brought their cause before me, or when they complained that my dealings with them had been severe." ¶ *When they contended with me.* That is, when they brought their cause before me, and complained that I had not provided for them comfortably, or that their task had been too hard. If in any respect they supposed they had cause of complaint, I listened to them attentively, and endeavoured to do right. He did not take advantage of his power to oppress them, nor did he suppose that they had no rights of any kind. It is evident, from this, that Job had those who sustained to him the relation of servants; but whether they were slaves, or hired servants, is not known. The language here will agree with either supposition, though it

visiteth, what shall I answer him?

15 Did<sup>h</sup> not he that made me in the womb make him? and<sup>1</sup> did not one fashion us in the womb?

<sup>h</sup> Pr. 22. 2.

<sup>1</sup> or, did he not fashion us in one womb?

cannot be doubted that slavery was known as early as the time of Job. There is no certain evidence that he held any slaves, in the proper sense of the term, nor that he regarded slavery as right. Comp. Notes on ch. i. 3. He here refers to the numerous persons that had been in his employ in the days of his prosperity, and says that he had never taken advantage of his power or rank to do them wrong.

14. *What then shall I do when God riseth up?* That is, when he riseth up to pronounce sentence on men, or to execute impartial justice. Job admits that if he had done injustice to a servant, he would have reason to dread the divine indignation, and that he could have no excuse. "I tremble," said President Jefferson, speaking of slavery in the United States, "when I remember that God is just!" Notes on Virginia. ¶ *And when he visiteth.* When he comes to inspect human conduct. Umbreit renders it, "when he punishes." The word *visit* is often used in this sense in the Scriptures.

15. *Did not he that made me in the womb make him?* Had we not one and the same Creator, and have we not consequently the same nature? We may observe in regard to this sentiment, (1.) That it indicates a very advanced state of view in regard to man. The attempt has been always made by those who wish to tyrannize over others, or who aim to make slaves of others, to show that they are of a different race, and that in the design for which they were made, they are wholly inferior. Arguments have been derived from their complexion, from their supposed inferiority of intellect, and the deep degradation of their condition, often little above that of brutes, to prove that they were originally inferior to the rest of mankind. On this the plea has been

16 If I have withheld the poor from *their* desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail;

often urged, and oftener *felt* than urged, that it is right to reduce them to slavery. Since this feeling so early existed, and since there is so much that may be plausibly said in defence of it, it shows that Job had derived his views from something more than the speculations of men, and the desire of power, when he says that he regarded all men as originally equal, and as having the same Creator. It is, in fact, a sentiment which men have been practically very reluctant to believe, and which works its way very slowly even yet on the earth. Comp. Acts xvii. 26. (2.) This sentiment, if fairly embraced and carried out, would soon destroy slavery everywhere. If men *felt* that they were reducing to bondage those who were originally on a level with themselves—made by the same God, with the same faculties, and for the same end; if they felt that in their very origin, in their nature, there was that which could not be made mere *property*, it would soon abolish the whole system. It is kept up only where men endeavor to convince themselves that there is *some original inferiority* in the slave which makes it proper that he should be reduced to servitude and be held as property. But as soon as there can be diffused abroad the sentiment of Paul, that “God hath made of one blood all nations of men” (Acts xvii. 26), or the sentiment of the patriarch Job, that “the same God made us and them in the womb,” that moment the shackles of the slave will fall, and he will be free. Hence it is apparent how Christianity, that carries this lesson on its fore-front, is the grand remedy for the evils of slavery, and needs only to be universally diffused to bring the system to an end. ¶ *And did not one fashion us in the womb?* Marg., or, *did he not fashion us in one womb?* The Hebrew will bear either construction, but the parallelism rather requires that given in the text, and most expositors agree in this interpretation. The sentiment is, whichever interpretation be adopted, that they had

17 Or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof;

a common origin; that God would watch over them alike as his children; and that therefore they had equal rights.

16. *If I have withheld the poor from their desire.* Job now turns to another class of virtues, regarded also as of great importance in the patriarchal ages, kindness to the poor and the afflicted; to the fatherless and the widow. He appeals to his former life on this subject; affirms that he had a good conscience in the recollection of his dealings with them, and impliedly declares that it could not have been for any deficiency in the exercise of these virtues that his calamities had come upon him. The meaning here is, that he had not denied to the poor their wish. If they had come and desired bread of him, he had not withheld it. See ch. xxii. 7. ¶ *Or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail.* That is, I have not frustrated her hopes, or disappointed her expectations, when she has looked intently upon me, and desired my aid. The “failing of the eyes” refers to *failing of the object of their expectation*; or the expression means that she had not looked to him in vain. See ch. xi. 20.

17. *Or have eaten my morsel myself alone.* If I have not imparted what I had, though ever so small, to others. This was in accordance with the Oriental laws of hospitality. It is regarded as a fixed law among the Arabians, that the guest shall always be helped first, and to that which is best; and no matter how needy the family may be, or how much distressed with hunger, the settled laws of hospitality demand that the stranger-guest shall have the first and best portion. Dr. Robinson, in his “Biblical Researches,” gives an amusing instance of the extent to which this law is carried, and the sternness with which it is executed among the Arabs. In the journey from Suez to Mount Sinai, intending to furnish a supper for the Arabs in their employ, he and his fellow-travellers had bought a kid, and led it along to the place of their encamp-



18 (For from my youth he was brought up with me, as *with* a father, and I have guided <sup>1</sup> her

<sup>1</sup> i. e., the widow.

ment. At night, the kid was killed and roasted, and the Arabs were anticipating a savory supper. But those of whom they had bought the kid, learned in some way that they were to encamp near, and naturally concluded that the kid was bought to be eaten, and followed them to the place of encampment, to the number of five or six persons. "Now the stern law of Arabian hospitality demands, that whenever a guest is present at a meal, whether there be much or little, the first and best portion must be laid before the stranger. In this instance, the five or six guests attained their object, and had not only the selling of the kid, but also the eating of it, while our poor Arabs, whose mouths had long been watering with expectation, were forced to take up with the fragments." Vol. i. 118. There is often, indeed, much ostentation in the hospitality of the Orientals, but the law is stern and inflexible. "No sooner," says Shaw (*Travels*, vol. i. p. 20), "was our food prepared, than one of the Arabs, having placed himself on the highest spot of ground in the neighbourhood, called out thrice with a loud voice to all their brethren, *the sons of the faithful*, to come and partake of it; though none of them were in view, or perhaps within a hundred miles of them." The great law of hospitality Job says he had carefully observed, and had not withheld what he had from the poor and the fatherless.

18. *For from my youth he was brought up with me.* This verse is usually regarded as a parenthesis, though very various expositions have been given of it. Some have understood it as *denying* that he had in any way neglected the widow and the fatherless, and affirming that the orphan had always, even from his youth, found a father in him, and the widow a guide. Others, as our translators, suppose that it is a parenthesis thrown in to indicate his general

from my mother's womb;)

19 If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering;

course of life, although the imprecation which he makes on himself, if he had neglected the widow and the orphan, is found in ver. 22. Luther reads the two previous verses as questions, and this as an answer to them, and so also do Rosenmüller and Noyes. Umbreit regards this verse as a parenthesis. This is, probably, to be considered as the correct interpretation, for this better agrees with the Hebrew than the other proposed. It *implies* a denial of having neglected the widow and the orphan, but the *full* expression of his abhorrence of a charge of having done so, is to be found in the strong language in ver. 22. The unusual Hebrew word גִּדְלֵי stands, probably, for גָּדַל עִמִּי—"he was brought up with me." This form of the word does not elsewhere occur.

*father.* That is, he always found in me one who treated him as a father. The meaning is, that he had always had under his care those who were orphans; that from his very youth they had been accustomed to look up to him as a father; and that they had never been disappointed in him. It is the language of one who seems to have been born to rank, and who had the means of benefiting others, and who had done it all his life. This accords also with the Oriental notions of *kindness*—requiring that it should be shown especially to the widow and the fatherless. ¶ *I have guided her.* Marg., "That is, the widow." The meaning is, that he had been her counsellor and friend. ¶ *From my mother's womb.* This cannot be literally true, but it means that he had done it from early life; or as we would say, he had *always* done it.

19. *If I have seen any perish, &c.* He turns to another virtue of the same general class—that of providing for the poor. The meaning is clear, that he had always assisted the poor and needy.

20 If <sup>i</sup> his loins have not blessed me, and *if* he were *not* warmed with the fleece of my sheep;

21 If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate:

<sup>i</sup> De. 24. 13.

20. *If his loins have not blessed me.* This is a personification by which the part of the body that had been clothed by the benevolence of Job is supposed to speak and render him thanks.

21. *If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless.* That is, if I have taken advantage of my rank, influence, and power, to oppress and injure him. ¶ *When I saw my help in the gate.* The gate of a city was a place of concourse; a place where debates were held, and where justice was administered. Job speaks here of that part of his life when he was clothed with authority as a magistrate, or when he had power and influence as a public man. He says that he had never abused this power to oppress the fatherless. He had never taken advantage of his influence to injure them, because he saw he had a strong party under his control, or because he had power enough to carry his point, or because he had those under him who would sustain him in an oppressive measure. This is spoken with reference to the usual feeble and defenceless condition of the orphan, as one who is deprived of his natural protector, and who is, therefore, liable to be wronged by those in power.

22. *Then let mine arm.* The strong language which Job uses here, shows his consciousness of innocence, and his detestation of the offences to which he here refers, vs. 16—22. The word rendered *arm* here (רֶכֶשׁ) means, properly, the *shoulder*. Isa. xli. 7, xlix. 22; Num. vii. 9. Comp. Notes on Isa. xi. 14. There is no instance, it is believed, unless this is one, in which it means *arm*, and the meaning here is, that he wished, if he had been guilty, his shoulder might separate from the blade. So Herder, Rosenmüller, Umbreit, and

22 *Then* let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from <sup>l</sup> the bone.

23 For <sup>k</sup> destruction *from* God *was* a terror to me, and by reason of his highness <sup>l</sup> I could not endure.

<sup>l</sup> or, the *chanel-bone*.

<sup>k</sup> Ps. 119. 120.

<sup>l</sup> Ps. 76. 7.

Noyes render it; and so the Vulgate and the LXX. ¶ *From my shoulder blade.* The scapula—the flat bone to which the upper arm is attached. The wish of Job is, that the shoulder might separate from that, and of course the arm would be useless. Such a strong imprecation implies a firm consciousness of innocence. ¶ *And mine arm.* The word *arm* here denotes the *forearm*—the arm from the elbow to the fingers. ¶ *From the bone.* Marg., “the *chanel-bone*.” Literally, “from the reed”—רֶכֶשׁ. Umbreit renders it, *Schneller als ein Rohr—quicker than a reed.* The word רֶכֶשׁ, *káná*, means, properly, a *reed*, *cane*, *calamus*, (Notes on Isa. xliii. 24,) and is here applied to the upper arm, or arm above the elbow, from its resemblance to a reed or cane. It is applied, also, to the arm or branch of a chandelier, or candlestick, Ex. xxv. 31, and to the rod or beam of a balance. Isa. xli. 6. The meaning here is, that he wished that his arm should be broken at the elbow, or the forearm be separated from the upper arm, if he were guilty of the sins which he had specified. There is allusion, probably, and there is great force and propriety in the allusion, to what he had said in ver. 21: “If his arm had been lifted up against an orphan, he prayed that it might fall powerless.”

23. *For destruction from God was a terror to me.* The destruction which God would bring upon one who was guilty of the crime here specified, awed and restrained me. He was deterred from this crime of oppressing the fatherless by the fear of God. He could have escaped the judgment of men. He had power and influence enough not to dread the penalty of human law. He

24 If <sup>m</sup> I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, *Thou art* my confidence;

25 If I rejoiced because my wealth *was* great, and because

m 1 Ti. 6. 17.

could have done it in such a way as not to have been arraigned before any earthly tribunal, but he remembered that the eye of God was upon him, and that he was the avenger of the fatherless and the widow. ¶ *And by reason of his highness.* On account of his majesty, exaltation, glory. ¶ *I could not endure.* לֹא אֵכֶל—I could not; that is, I could not *do it*. I was so much awed by his majesty; I had such a veneration for him, that I could not be guilty of such an offence.

24. *If I have made gold my hope.* That is, if I have put my trust in gold rather than in God; if I have fixed my affections with idolatrous attachment on riches rather than on my Maker. Job here introduces another class of sins, and says that his conscience did not charge him with guilt in respect to them. He had before spoken mainly of social duties, and of his manner of life towards the poor, the needy, the widow, and the orphan. He here turns to the duty which he owed to God, and says that his conscience did not charge him with *idolatry* in any form. He had indeed been rich, but he had not fixed his affections with idolatrous attachment on his wealth. ¶ *Or have said to the fine gold.* The word here used (כָּהָן) is the same which is employed in ch. xxviii. 16, to denote the gold of Ophir. It is used to express that which was most pure—from the verb כָּהַן—to *hide, to hoard*, and then denoting that which was hidden, hoarded, *precious*. The meaning is, that he had not put his trust in that which was most sought after, and which was deemed of the highest value by men.

25. *If I rejoiced because my wealth was great.* That is, if I have rejoiced as if I might now confide in it, or put my trust in it. He had not found his principal joy in his property,

mine hand had gotten <sup>1</sup> much;

26 If I beheld the <sup>2</sup> sun when it shined, or the moon walking <sup>3</sup> in brightness;

<sup>1</sup> found.

<sup>2</sup> light.

<sup>3</sup> bright.

nor had he attempted to find in that the happiness which he ought to seek in God. ¶ *And because mine hand had gotten much.* Marg., *found*. Prof. Lee translates this, "When as a mighty man my hand prevailed." But the usual interpretation is given in our translation, and this accords better with the connexion. The word *found* better expresses the sense of the Hebrew than *gotten*, but the sense is not materially varied.

26. *If I beheld the sun when it shined.* Marg., *light*. The Hebrew word (אֹר) properly means *light*, but that it here means the *sun* is manifest from the connexion, since the *moon* occurs in the parallel member of the sentence. Why the word *light* is used here rather than *sun*, can be only a matter of conjecture. It may be because the worship to which Job refers was not primarily and originally that of the sun, the moon, or the stars, but of *light as such*, and that he mentions this as the essential feature of the idolatry which he had avoided. The worship of *light* in general soon became, in fact, the worship of the sun—as that is the principal source of light. There is no doubt that Job here refers to idolatrous worship, and the passage is particularly valuable, as it describes one of the forms of idolatry then existing, and refers to some of the customs then prevalent in such worship. The word *light* is used also to denote the sun in ch. xxxvii. 21. Comp. Isa. xviii. 4, Habak. iii. 4. So, also, Homer speaks of the sun not only as λαμπρόν φάος ἡλίου—*bright light of the sun*, but simply as φάος—*light*. *Odys.* Γ 335. The worship here referred to is that of the heavenly bodies, and it is known that this existed in the early periods of the world, and was probably one of the first forms of idolatry. It is expressly mentioned by Ezekiel as prevailing in his time. Ch. viii. 16, "And they wor-

27 And my heart hath been

secretly enticed, or · my mouth  
hath kissed my hand:

*1 my hand hath kissed my mouth.*

shipped the sun towards the east." That it prevailed in the time of Moses is evident from the caution which he gives in Deut. iv. 19. Comp. 2 Kings xxiii. 5. It is well known, also, that the worship of the heavenly bodies was common in the East, and particularly in Chaldea—near to which Job is supposed to have lived; and it was a remarkable fact that one who was surrounded with idolaters of this description had been enabled always to keep himself pure. The principle on which this worship was founded was, probably, that of gratitude. Men adored the objects from which they derived important benefits, as well as deprecated the wrath of those which were supposed to exert a malignant influence. But among the objects from which men derived the greatest benefits were the sun and moon, and hence they were objects of worship. The stars, also, were supposed to exert important influences over men, and hence they also early became objects of adoration. An additional reason for the worship of the heavenly bodies may have been, that *light* was a natural and striking symbol of the divinity, and those shining bodies may have been at first honored as representatives of the Deity. The worship of the heavenly bodies was called Sabaism, from the Hebrew word *צבא* *tzaba*—*host*, or *army*—as being the worship of the hosts of heaven. It is supposed to have had its origin in Persia, and to have spread thence to the West. That the moon was worshipped as a deity, is abundantly proved by the testimony of the ancient writers. Hottinger, *Hist. Orient.* Lib. i. c. 8, speaking of the worship of the Zabaists, adduces the testimony of Ali Said Vaheb, saying that the first day of the week was devoted to the sun; the second to the moon; the third to Mars, &c. Maimonides says that the Zabaists worshipped the moon, and that they also said that Adam led mankind to that species of worship. Mor. Nev. P. iii. Clemens Alexandr. says (in

Protrept.) *καὶ προσεκύνησαν ἥλιον ὡς ἰνδοὶ, καὶ σελήνην ὡς φοῦγες.* Herodotus says of the people of Libya (Lib. iv. in Melp.), *θύουσι δὲ ἡλίῳ καὶ σελήνῃ μόνονισι.* Julius Cæsar says of the Germans, that they worshipped the moon, Lib. vi. de B. G. p. 158. The Romans had a temple consecrated to the moon. Tacit. Ann. Lib. xv., Livy L. xl. See Geor. Frid. Meinhardi Diss. de SelenolatRIA, in Ugolin's *Thesau. Sacr.*, tom. xxiii. p. 831, seq. Indeed, we have a proof of the worship of the moon in our own language, in the name given to the second day of the week—*Monday*, i. e., *Moon-day*, implying that it was formerly regarded as devoted to the worship of the moon. The word "*beheld*" in the passage before us must be understood in an idolatrous sense. "If I have looked upon the sun as an object of worship." Schultens explains this passage as referring to splendid and exalted characters, who, on account of their brilliance and power, may be compared to the sun at noon-day, and to the moon in its brightness. But the more obvious and common reference is to the sun and moon as objects of worship. ¶ *Or the moon walking in brightness.* Marg., *bright.* The word "*walking*," here applied to the moon, may refer either to its course through the heavens, or it may mean, as Dr. Good supposes, advancing to her full; "*brightly, or splendidly progressive.*" The LXX render the passage strangely enough. "Do we not see the shining sun eclipsed? and the moon changing? For it is not in them."

27. *And my heart hath been secretly enticed.* That is, away from God, or led into sin. ¶ *Or my mouth hath kissed my hand.* Marg., *my hand hath kissed my mouth.* The margin accords with the Hebrew. It was customary in ancient worship to kiss the idol that was worshipped. Comp. 1 Kings xix. 18, "I have left me seven thousand in Israel—and every mouth which hath not kissed him." See, also, Hos. xiii. 2. The Mo-

28 This also <sup>n</sup> were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above.

29 If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or

<sup>n</sup> De. 17. 2—7.

hammedans at the present day, in their worship at Mecca, kiss the black stone which is fastened in the corner of the Beat Allah, as often as they pass it, in going round the Caaba. If they cannot come near enough to kiss it, they touch it with the hand, and kiss that. An Oriental pays his respects to one of a superior station by kissing his hand, and putting it to his forehead. *Paxton*. See the custom of kissing the hand of a prince, as it exists in Arabia, described by Niebuhr, *Reisebeschreibung*, 1, S. 414. The custom prevailed, also, among the Romans and Greeks. Thus Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* xxviii. 2) says, *Inter adorandum dexteram ad osculum referimus, et totum corpus, circumagimus*. So Lucian, in the book, *περὶ ὀρχήσεως*, says, “And the Indians, rising early, adore the sun—not as we, *kissing the hand*—*τὴν χεῖρα κύσαντες*—think that our vow is perfect.” The foundation of the custom here alluded to, is the *respect* and *affection* which is shown for one by kissing; and as the heavenly bodies which were worshipped were so remote that the worshippers could not have access to them, they expressed their veneration by kissing the hand. Job means to say, that he had never performed an act of homage to the heavenly bodies.

28. *This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge*. Note, ver. 11. Among the Hebrews, idolatry was an offence punishable by death by stoning. Deut. xvii. 2—7. It is possible, also, that this might have been elsewhere in the patriarchal times a crime punishable in this manner. At all events, Job regarded it as a heinous offence, and one of which the magistrate ought to take cognizance. ¶ *For I should have denied the God that is above*. The worship of the heavenly bodies would have been, in fact, the denial of the existence of any

lifted up myself when evil found him:

30 Neither have I suffered my <sup>1</sup> mouth to sin <sup>o</sup> by wishing a curse to his soul.

<sup>1</sup> *palate*.

<sup>o</sup> Ec. 5. 6.

Superior Being. This, in fact, always occurs, for idolaters have no knowledge of the true God.

29. *If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me*. Job here introduces another class of offences, of which he says he was innocent. The subject referred to is the proper treatment of those who injure us. In respect to this, he says that he was entirely conscious of freedom from exultation when calamity came upon a foe, and that he had never even wished him evil in his heart. The word “*destruction*” here means calamity, disappointment, or affliction of any kind. It had never been pleasant to him to see one who hated him suffer. It is needless to remark how entirely this accords with the New Testament. And it is pleasant to find such a sentiment as this expressed in the early age of the world, and to see how the influence of true religion is at all times the same. The religion of Job led him to act out the beautiful sentiment afterwards embodied in the instructions of the Saviour, and made binding on all his followers. Matth. v. 44. True religion will lead a man to act out what is embodied in its precepts, whether they are expressed in formal language or not. ¶ *Or lifted up myself*. Been elated or rejoiced. ¶ *When evil found him*. When calamity overtook him.

30. *Neither have I suffered my mouth*. Marg., as in Hebrew, *palate*. The word is often used for the mouth in general, and especially as the organ of the voice—from the use and importance of the palate in speaking. Prov. viii. 7. “For my palate (פֶּה) speaketh truth.” It is used as the organ of taste, Job xii. 11; comp. vi. 30; Ps. cxix. 103. ¶ *By wishing a curse to his soul*. It must have been an extraordinary degree of piety which would permit a man to say

31 If the men of my tabernacle said not, Oh that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied.

this with truth, that he had never harboured a wish of injury to an enemy. Few are the men, probably, even now, who could say this, and who are enabled to keep their minds free from every wish that calamities and woes may overtake those who are seeking their hurt. Yet this is the nature of true religion. It controls the heart, represses the angry and revengeful feelings, and creates in the soul an earnest desire for the happiness even of those who injure us.

31. *If the men of my tabernacle.* The men of my tent; or those who dwell with me. The reference is, doubtless, to those who were in his employ, and who, being constantly with him, had an opportunity to observe his manner of life. On this verse there has been a great variety of exposition, and interpreters are by no means agreed as to its meaning. Herder connects it with the previous verse, and renders it,

"No! my tongue uttered no evil word,  
Nor any imprecation against him,  
When the men of my tent said,  
'O that we had his flesh, it would satisfy us.'"

That is, though he were the bitterest enemy of my house, and all were in open violence. Noyes translates it,

"Have not the men of my tent exclaimed,  
'Who is there that hath not been satisfied with his meat?'"

Umbreit supposes that it is designed to celebrate the benevolence of Job, and that the meaning is, that all his companions—the inmates of his house—could bear him witness that not one of the poor was allowed to depart without being satisfied with his hospitality. They were abundantly fed, and their wants supplied. The verse is undoubtedly to be regarded as connected, as Ikenius supposes, with the following, and is designed to illustrate the hospitality of Job. His object is, to show that those who dwelt with him, and who had every opportunity of knowing all

32 The stranger <sup>p</sup> did not lodge in the street: *but* I opened my doors to the traveller.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>p</sup> Is. 58. 7. He. 13. 2.

<sup>1</sup> or, way.

about him, could never say that the stranger was not hospitably entertained. The phrase, "If the men of my tabernacle said not," means, that a case never occurred in which they could not make use of the language which follows; they never could say that the stranger was not hospitably entertained. ¶ *Oh that we had.* The phrase וְיָדָעְנוּ, commonly means, "O that"—as the *Latin* *Utinam*—implying a wish, or desire. See ch. xix. 23, xxxi. 35. But here the phrase seems to be used in the sense of "Who will give? or, Who will show or furnish?" (comp. ch. xiv. 4); and the sense is, "Who will refer to one instance in which the stranger has not been hospitably entertained?" *Of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied.* Or, rather, "Who will refer to an instance in which it can be said that we have not been satisfied with his flesh?—i. e., from his table, or by his hospitality." The word *flesh* here cannot mean, as our translation would seem to imply, the flesh of Job himself, as if it were to be torn and lacerated with a spirit of revenge, but that which his table furnished by a generous hospitality. The LXX render this, "If my maid-servants have often said, 'Oh that we had some of his flesh to eat!' while I was living luxuriously." For a great variety of opinions on the passage, see Schultens *in loc.* The above interpretation of Ikenius is the most simple, natural, and obvious of any which have been proposed, and is adopted by Schultens and Rosenmüller.

32. *The stranger did not lodge in the street.* This is designed to illustrate the sentiment in the previous verse, and to express his consciousness that he had showed the most generous hospitality. ¶ *But I opened my doors to the traveller.* Marg., or, way. The word here used (דֶּרֶךְ) means, properly, way, path, road; but it also denotes those who travel on such a way. See ch. vi.

## 33 If I covered my transgres-

sions <sup>1</sup> as Adam, <sup>a</sup> by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom:<sup>1</sup> or, after the manner of men. q Ge. 3. 8, 12.

19, "The troops of Tema looked," Heb. *נִסְּתָה הַדֶּרֶךְ*—*the ways, or paths, of Tema*; that is, those who travelled in those paths. Vulgate here, *viatori*. Sept., "To every one that came"—*παντι ἑλθόντι*. This was one of the methods of hospitality—the central and crowning virtue among the Arabs to this day, and among the Orientals in all ages. Among the boasts of hospitality, showing the place which this virtue had in their estimation, and the methods by which it was practised, we may refer to such expressions as the following:—"I occupy the public way with my tent;" that is, to every traveller, without distinction, my tent is open and my table is spread. "He makes the public path the place for the cords of his tent;" that is, he fixed the pins and cords of his tent in the midst of the public highway, so that every traveller might enter. These examples are quoted by Schultens from the Hamasa. Another beautiful example may be taken from the same collection of Arabic poems. I give the Latin translation of Schultens:

"Quam sæpe latratum imitanti viatori, cui resonabat echo,  
Suscitavi ignem, cujus lignum luculentum,  
Properusque surrexi ad eum, ut prædæ mihi loco esset,  
Præ metu ne populus meus eum ante me occuparet."

That is, "How often to the traveller, imitating the bark of the dog, and the echo of whose voice was heard, have I kindled a fire, the shining wood of which I quick raised up to him, as one would hasten to the prey, in fear lest some one of my own people should anticipate me in the privileges and rites of hospitality." The allusion here to the imitation of the barking of a dog, refers to the custom of travellers at night, who make this noise when they need a place of rest. This sound is responded to by the dogs which watch around the tents of their masters, and the sound is the signal for a general rush to show hospitality to the stranger.

Burckhardt, speaking of the inhabitants of the Houran—the country east of the Jordan, and south of Damascus, says, "A traveller may alight at any house he pleases; a mat will be immediately spread for him, coffee made, and a breakfast or dinner set before him. In entering a village, it has often happened to me, that several persons presented themselves, each begging that I would lodge at his house. It is a point of honor with the host never to receive the smallest return from a guest. Besides the private habitations, which offer to every traveller a secure night's shelter, there is in every village the Medhafa of the Sheikh, where all strangers of decent appearance are received and entertained. It is the duty of the Sheikh to maintain this Medhafa, which is like a tavern, with the difference that the host himself pays the bill. The Sheikh has a public allowance to defray these expenses, and hence a man of the Houran, intending to travel about for a fortnight, never thinks of putting a single para in his pocket; he is sure of being everywhere well received, and of living better, perhaps, than at his own home." *Travels in Syria*, pp. 294, 295.

33. *If I covered my transgressions as Adam.* That is, if I have attempted to hide or conceal them; if, conscious of guilt, I have endeavoured to cloak my sins, and to appear righteous. There has been great variety of opinion about the meaning of this expression. The margin reads it, "After the manner of men." Luther renders it, "Have I covered my wickedness as a man"—*Habe ich meine Schalkheit wie ein Mensch gedeckt*. Coverdale, "Have I ever done any wicked deed where through I shamed myself before men." Herder, "Did I hide my faults like a mean man." Schultens, "If I have covered my sin as Adam." The Vulgate, *Quasi homo*—"as a man." The Sept., "If when I sinned unwillingly (*ἀκούσιως*—*inadvertently, undesignedly*)

34 Did I fear a great multitude, or did the contempt of

r Ex. 23. 2.

I concealed my sin." Noyes, "After the manner of men." Umbreit, *Nach Menschenart*—"After the manner of men." Rosenmüller, *As Adam*. The Chaldee, אָדָם, meaning, as Rosenmüller remarks, as Adam; and the Syriac, *as men*. The meaning may either be, as men are accustomed to do when they commit a crime—referring to the common practice of the guilty to attempt to cloak their offences, or to the attempt of Adam to hide his sin from his Maker after the fall. Gen. iii. 7, 8. It is not possible to decide with certainty which is the correct interpretation, for either will accord with the Hebrew. But in favour of the supposition that it refers to the effort of Adam to conceal his sin, we may remark, (1.) That there can be little or no doubt that that transaction was known to Job by tradition. (2.) It furnished him a pertinent and striking illustration of the point before him. (3.) The illustration is, by supposing that it refers to him, much more striking than on the other supposition. It is true that men often attempt to conceal their guilt, and that it may be set down as a fact very general in its character; but still it is not so universal that there are no exceptions. But here was a specific and well known case, and one which, as it was the first, so it was the most sad and melancholy instance that had ever occurred of an attempt to conceal guilt. It was not an attempt to hide it from *man*—for there was then no other man to witness it; but an attempt to hide it from *God*. From such an attempt Job says he was free. ¶ *By hiding mine iniquity in my bosom*. By attempting to conceal it so that others would not know it. Adam attempted to conceal his fault even from God; and it is common with men, when they have done wrong, to endeavour to hide it from others.

34. *Did I fear a great multitude*. Our translators have rendered this as if Job meant to say that he had not

families terrify me, that I kept silence, and went not out of the door?

been deterred from doing what he supposed was right by the fear of others; as if he had been independent, and had done what he knew to be right, undeterred by the fear of popular fury, or the loss of the favor of the great. This version is adopted also by the Vulgate, by Herder, and substantially by Coverdale and Luther. Another interpretation has, however, been proposed, and is adopted by Schulzens, Noyes, Good, Umbreit, Dathe, and Scott, which is, that this is to be regarded as an *imprecation*, or that this is the punishment which he invoked and expected if he had been guilty of the crime which is specified in the previous verses. The meaning then would be, "Then let me be confounded before the great multitude! Let the contempt of families cover me with shame! Let me keep silence, and let me never appear abroad!" The Hebrew will admit of either construction, and either of them will accord well with the connexion. The *latter*, however, regarding it as an imprecation, seems to me to be preferable, for two reasons. (1.) It will accord more forcibly with what he had said in the previous verse. The sense then would be, as expressed by Patrick, "If I have studied to appear better than I am, and have not made a free confession, but, like our first parent, have concealed or excused my faults, and, out of self-love, have hidden mine iniquity, because I dread what the people will say of me, or am terrified by the contempt into which the knowledge of my guilt will bring me with the neighboring families, then am I content my mouth should be stopped, and that I never stir out of my door any more." (2.) This interpretation seems to be required, in order to make a proper close of his remarks. The general course in this chapter has been to specify an offence, and then to utter an imprecation if he had been guilty of it. In the previous verses he had specified crimes of which he had declared



35 Oh that one would hear me! behold, <sup>1</sup> my desire is, *that* the Almighty would answer me, and *that* mine adversary had written a book.

<sup>1</sup> or, *my sign is, that the Almighty will answer me.*

himself innocent; but unless this verse be so regarded, there is no invocation of any corresponding punishment if he had been guilty. It seems probable, therefore, that this verse is so to be regarded. According to this, the phrase, "Did I fear a great multitude," means, "Then let me be terrified by a multitude—by the opinions of the world, and let this be the punishment of my sin. Since by the fear of others I was led to hide my sin in my bosom, let it be my lot to lose all popular favor, and feel that I am the object of public scorn and contempt!" ¶ *Or did the contempt of families terrify me.* Let the contempt of families crush me; let me be despised and abhorred by them. If I was led to hide sins in my bosom because I feared them, then let me be doomed to the total loss of their favor, and become wholly the object of their scorn. ¶ *That I kept silence.* Or let me keep silence as a punishment. That is, let me not be admitted as a counsellor, or allowed to express my sentiments in the public assemblies. ¶ *And went not out at the door.* That is, "Let me not go out at the door. Let me be confined to my dwelling, and never be allowed to appear in public, to mingle in society, to take part in public affairs—because, by the fear of the world, I attempted to hide my faults in my bosom. Such a punishment would be appropriate to such an offence. The retribution would be no more than a suitable recompence for such an act of guilt—and I would not shrink from it."

35. *Oh that one would hear me!* This refers undoubtedly to God. It is, literally, "Who will give to me one hearing me;" and the wish is, that which he has so often expressed, that he might get his cause fairly before God. He feels assured that there would be a favorable verdict, if there could be a fair judicial investigation. Comp. Notes on ch. xiii. 3. ¶ *Behold, my desire is—* Marg., "Or, *my sign is, that the Almighty will answer me.*" The word rendered

in the text *desire*, and in the margin *sign*, (וַיִּ, *Táv*.) means, properly, a mark, or sign, and is also the name of the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Then the word means, according to Gesenius, (*Lex.*) a mark or cross, as subscribed to a bill of complaint; hence the bill itself, or, as we should say, *the pleading*. According to this, Job means to say that he was ready for trial, and that there was his *bill of complaint*, or his *pleading*, or his *bill of defence*. So Herder renders it, "See my defence." Coverdale, "Lo, this is my cause." Miss Smith renders it, "Behold my gage!" Um brei, *Meine Klagschrift—My accusation*. There can be no doubt that it refers to the forms of a judicial investigation, and that the idea is, that Job was ready for the trial. "Here," says he, "is my defence, my argument, my pleading, my bill! I wait that my adversary should come to the trial." The name here used as given to the bill or pleading (וַיִּ, *Táv*, mark, or sign), probably had its origin from the fact that some mark was affixed to it—of some such significance as a seal—by which it was certified to be the real bill of the party, and by which he acknowledged it as his own. This might have been done by signing his name, or by some conventional mark that was common in those times. ¶ *That the Almighty would answer me.* That is, answer me as on trial; that the cause might be fairly brought to an issue. This wish he had frequently expressed. ¶ *And that mine adversary.* God; regarded as the opposite party in the suit. ¶ *Had written a book.* Or, would write down his charge. The wish is, that what God had against him were in like manner entered in a bill, or pleading, that the charge might be fairly investigated. On the word *book*, comp. Notes ch. xix. 23. It means here, a pleading in court, a bill, or charge against any one. There is no irreverence in the language here. Job is anxious that his true character should be investigated,

36 Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, *and* bind it *as* a crown to me.

37 I would declare unto him the number of my steps; as a

and that the great matter at issue should be determined; and he draws his language and illustrations from well-known practices in courts of law.

36. *Surely I would take it upon my shoulder.* That is, the book or bill which the Almighty would write in the case. Job says that he has such confidence that what God would record in his case would be in his favor, such confidence that he had no charge of hypocrisy against him, and that he who knew him altogether would not bring such an accusation against him, that he would bear it off triumphantly on his shoulders. It would be all that he could desire. This does not refer to what a judge would decide, if the case were submitted to him, but to a case where an opponent or adversary in court should bring all that he could say against him. He says that he would bear even such a bill on his shoulders in triumph, and that it would be a full vindication of his innocence. It would afford him the best vindication of his character, and would be that which he had long desired. ¶ *And bind it as a crown to me.* I would regard it as an ornament—a diadem. I would bind it on my head as a crown is worn by princes, and would march forth exultingly with it. Instead of covering me with shame, it would be the source of rejoicing, and I would exhibit it everywhere in the most triumphant manner. It is impossible for any one to express a more entire consciousness of innocence from charges alleged against him, than Job does by this language.

37. *I would declare unto him the number of my steps.* That is, I would disclose to him the whole course of my life. This is language also appropriate to a judicial trial, and the meaning is, that Job was so confident of his integrity that he would approach God and make his whole course of life known to him. ¶ *As a prince would I go near unto him.*

prince would I go near unto him.

38 If my land cry against me, or that the furrows likewise thereof<sup>1</sup> complain;

<sup>1</sup> *weep.*

With the firm and upright step with which a prince commonly walks. I would not go in a base, cringing manner, but in a manner that evinced a consciousness of integrity. I would not go bowed down under the consciousness of guilt, as a self-condemned malefactor, but with the firm and elastic foot-tread of one conscious of innocence. It must be remembered that all this is said with reference to the charges which had been brought against him by his friends, and not as claiming absolute perfection. He was accused of gross hypocrisy, and it was maintained that he was suffering the judicial infliction of Heaven on account of that. *So far as those charges were concerned*, he now says that he could go before God with the firm and elastic tread of a prince—with entire cheerfulness and boldness. We are not, however, to suppose that he did not regard himself as having the common infirmities and sinfulness of our fallen nature. The discussion does not turn at all on that point.

38. *If my land cry against me.* This is a new specification of an offence, and an imprecation of an appropriate punishment if he had been guilty of it. Many have supposed that these closing verses have been transferred from their appropriate place by an error of transcribers, and that they should have been inserted between vs. 23 and 24—or in some previous part of the chapter. It is certain that vs. 35—37 would make an appropriate and impressive close of the chapter, being a solemn appeal to God in reference to all the specifications, or to the general tenor of his life; but there is no authority from the MSS. to make any change in the present arrangement. All the ancient versions insert the verses in the place which they now occupy, and in this all versions agree, except, according to Kennicott, the Teutonic version, where they are

39 If I have eaten the <sup>1</sup> fruits thereof without money, or have caused <sup>2</sup> the owners thereof to lose their life:<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> strength. <sup>2</sup> or, the soul of the owners thereof to expire, or, breathe out. <sup>3</sup> 1 Ki. 21, 19.

inserted after ver. 25. All the MSS. also concur in the present arrangement. Schultens supposes that there is manifest pertinency and propriety in the present arrangement. The former specifications, says he, related mainly to his *private* life, this to his more *public* conduct; and the design is, to vindicate himself from the charge of injustice and crime in both respects, closing appropriately with the latter. Rosenmüller remarks, that in a composition composed in an age and country so remote as this, we are not to look for, or demand the observance of, the same regularity which is required by the modern canons of criticism. At all events, there is no authority for changing the present arrangement of the text. The meaning of the phrase "if my land cry out against me" is, that in the cultivation of his land he had not been guilty of injustice. He had not employed those to till it who had been compelled to do it, nor had he imposed on them unreasonable burdens, nor had he defrauded them of their wages. The land had not had occasion to cry out against him to God because fraud or injustice had been done to any in its cultivation. Comp. Gen. iv. 10; Hab. ii. 11. ¶ *Or that the furrows likewise thereof complain.* Marg., weep. The Hebrew is, "If the furrows weep together," or, "in like manner weep." This is a beautiful image. The very furrows in the field are personified as weeping on account of injustice which would be done them, and of the burdens which would be laid on them, if they were compelled to contribute to oppression and fraud.

39. *If I have eaten the fruits thereof.* Marg., strength. The strength of the earth is that which the earth produces, or which is the result of its strength. We speak now of a "strong soil"—meaning, that it is capable of bearing much. *Without money.* Heb., "without silver"

40 Let thistles grow instead of wheat, and <sup>3</sup> cockle instead of barley. The words of Job are ended.

<sup>3</sup> or, noisome weeds.

—silver being the principal circulating medium in early times. The meaning here is, "without paying for it;" either without having paid for the land, or for the labor. ¶ *Or have caused the owners thereof.* Marg., the soul of the owners thereof to expire, or breathe out. The Hebrew is, "If I have caused the life of the owners [or lords] of it to breathe out." The meaning is, if I have appropriated to myself the land or labor of others without paying for it, so that their means of living are taken away. He disclaims all injustice in the case. He had not deprived others of their land by violence or fraud, so that they had no means of subsistence.

40. *Let thistles grow.* Gen. iii. 18. Thistles are valueless; and Job is so confident of entire innocence in regard to this, that he says he would be willing, if he were guilty, to have his whole land overrun with noxious weeds. ¶ *And cockle.* Cockle is with us a well known herb that gets into wheat or other grain. It has a bluish flower, and small black seed, and is injurious, because it tends to discolor the flour. It is not certain by any means, however, that this is intended here. The margin is, *noisome weeds.* The Hebrew word (בִּזְזָה) is from בָּזַח, *Bâûsh*, to have a bad smell, to stink, and was given to the weed here referred to on that account. Comp. Isa. xxxiv. 3. The cockle, however, has no unpleasant odor, and the word here probably means noxious weeds. So it is rendered by Herder and by Noyes. The Sept. has βάρος, *bramble*; the Vulg., *spina, thorn*; Prof. Lee, *prunus sylvestris*, "a bramble resembling the hawthorn;" Schultens, *lulbrusca, wild vine.* ¶ *The words of Job are ended.* That is, in the present speech or argument; his discussions with his friends are closed. He spoke afterwards, as recorded in the subsequent

chapters, but not in controversy with them. He had vindicated his character, sustained his positions, and they had nothing to reply. The remainder of the book is occupied mainly with the speech of Elihu, and with the solemn and sublime address which God himself makes.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

## GENERAL ANALYSIS OF THE SPEECH OF ELIHU—CHS. XXXII.—XXXVII.

THIS chapter commences the speech of Elihu, which is continued to the close of ch. xxxvii. He has not appeared before in the controversy, and his name is not mentioned as having been present, though it is evident, from the tenor of his own remarks, that he had heard what had been said. Nothing more is known of this new character than is here expressed. Whether he came with the others to condole with Job (ch. ii. 11, 12), or whether he was his personal friend, and had been with him through all his trials, or whether he was one who accidentally happened to be present at this discussion, is not intimated. The remarkable sufferings of a man who had been so prominent as Job, would undoubtedly excite considerable attention; and it is no unreasonable supposition that many persons may have been attracted by the controversy that was maintained between him and his friends. But nothing more is known of Elihu than is specified in this chapter. See Notes on ver. 2. He is a young man, who had been restrained by modesty thus far from expressing his opinion, but who had listened attentively to all that had been said. An opportunity is now presented for his speaking when he could not be charged with impertinence, or with disrespect to his superiors in age, if he expressed his opinion. The three friends of Job had been completely silenced. The last speech of Bildad (ch. xxv.) had contained only a few very brief general reflections, which had nothing to do with the subject in dispute, and Zophar, whose turn would have been next, had not even attempted to reply. Eliphaz, of course—such were the notions of courtesy which prevailed in the East—would not presume to speak out of his regular turn. Job had waited for them to speak in their turn (ch. xxix. 1), and as they had not done it, he had gone on and made a full vindication of his life. He had no more which he wished to say, and so far as the original disputants were concerned, the controversy was ended.

At this stage of the argument, it was not improper for Elihu, though comparatively a youth, to speak. The reasons which he had for speaking, he himself states. They are, (1.) Because Job had, as he supposed, justified himself rather than God, ch. xxxii. 2. He had indulged in severe reflections on the divine dealings; had dwelt improperly on his own integrity, and had been unwilling to confess that he was a sinner. Whatever *blame* there was, he apprehended Job was disposed to cast on his Maker; and Elihu interposes, therefore, to state the truth on the subject, and to vindicate the character of God. (2.) The three friends of Job had been equally to blame. They had in no measured terms condemned Job, and yet they had made no answer to what he had said, ch. xxxii. 3. They pertinaciously held to their opinion that he was an eminently wicked man; that all these judgments had come on him for his sins; and yet they had not specified his faults, nor had they replied to what he had said in self-defence. In such a state of things, this youthful bystander and observer of the controversy interposes. His mind was greatly excited. He could contain himself (ver. 19) no longer. Both parties he regarded as wrong; both as deserving rebuke; and both as ignorant of the truth in the case. He appears, therefore, not as the advocate of either, but professes to come in as a sort of arbiter, to take the place of God (ch. xxxiii. 6), and to state what was the truth. Yet he does not settle the whole controversy. So far as the book of Job may be regarded as a *poem*, the design of its composer appears to have been, to introduce Elihu partly to show the necessity of the divine interposition, and to prepare the way for the sublime introduction of God himself in the close of the book. It is God who ultimately determines the difficult controversy, and who appears to state the exact truth in the case. The introduction of Elihu contributes much to the beauty and variety of the poem, and at the same time it accords with the design of the author. The remarks of *Boullier* on this point are worthy of attention. "The three men, driven on by a rash and inconsiderate impulse, attacked the character of a most upright man, not only by cruel suspicions, but by skilful criminations, with little discrimination in regard to the truth. A fourth actor is introduced, superior in wisdom to the others, who, by a new and more cautious method, undertakes to unravel the difficulty in regard to Job. Those things were indubitable which he taught, that there was no one among men who was so perfect that he did not offend against the laws of God; that there was no one who, trusting to his own innocence, could affirm that he was not obnoxious to the divine displeasure, or that the calamities which he suffered were undeserved. Job would not have reason for complaining, if the exact truth in regard to him were known, and his affairs accurately weighed in a balance. Elihu, therefore, did

not err in thus thinking, as he was not afterwards accused of fault. Yet in his own opinion or view he erred, for such was not the cause of the calamities of Job, as the beginning of his history shows. Elihu, in fact, did not err less than the others in his view, although he adduced a more probable conjecture, and sustained it by a true doctrine, that by this the great purpose of the author of this book might be accomplished, to wit, to show how little men can look into the secret reasons of Divine Providence, in which they can with more safety acquiesce, than curiously to inquire into them." See Rosenmüller, Intro. to the chapter. Elihu professes entire impartiality. He speaks only because he feels constrained to do it, and because such sentiments have been advanced that he can no longer keep silence. He says that he will not be influenced by respect to any man's person; he will attempt to flatter no one; he will speak wholly in the fear of God. After the introduction in ch. xxxi., he reproves Job because he had claimed too much for himself, and had indulged in a spirit of complaining against God. He goes on to say, that it is not necessary for God to develop all his counsels and purposes to men; that he often speaks in visions of the night; and that the great purpose of his dealings is to take away pride from man, and to produce true humility. This he does also by the dispensations of his providence, and by the calamities with which he visits his people. Yet he says, if when man is afflicted, he will be truly penitent, God will have mercy, and restore his flesh, so that it will be fresher than that of an infant. The true secret, therefore, of the divine dispensations, according to Elihu, the principle on which he explains all, is, that afflictions are DISCIPLINARY, or are designed to produce humility and penitence. They are not absolute proof of enormous wickedness and hypocrisy, as the friends of Job had maintained; nor could one in affliction lay claim to freedom from sin, or blame God, as he understood Job to have done, ch. xxxii. He next reproves Job for evincing a proud spirit of scorning, and especially for having maintained that, according to the divine dealings with him, it would be no advantage to a man to be pious, and to delight himself in God. Such an opinion implied that God was severe and wrong in his dealings. To meet this, Elihu brings forward a variety of considerations to show the impropriety of remarks of this kind, and especially to prove that the Governor of the world can do nothing inconsistent with benevolence and justice. From these considerations he infers that the duty of one in the situation of Job was plain. It was, to admit the possibility that he had sinned, and to resolve that he would offend no more, ch. xxxiv. He then proceeds to consider the opinion of Job, that under the arrangements of Divine Providence there could be no advantage in being righteous; that the good were subjected to so many calamities, that nothing was gained by all their efforts to be holy; and that there was no profit though a man were cleansed from sin, ch. xxxv. 3. To this Elihu replies, by showing that God is supreme; that the character of man cannot profit him; that he is governed by other considerations in his dealings than that man has a claim on him; and that there are great and important considerations which lead him to the course which he takes with men, and that to complain of these is proof of rebellion, ch. xxxv. Elihu then closes his address by stating (1.) the true principles of the divine administration, as he understood them, ch. xxxvi., and (2.) by saying that there is much in the divine government which is inscrutable, but that there are such evidences of greatness and wisdom in his government, there are so many things in the works of nature and in the course of events which we cannot understand, that we should submit to his superior wisdom, ch. xxxvii. See the Analyses to those chapters.

#### ANALYSIS OF CHAPTER XXXII.

THE chapter before us (xxxii.) is occupied mainly with a statement of the reasons which induced Elihu to speak at all. The first six verses are prose; the remainder, as well as the whole of the following chapters, consists of poetry. In vs. 1-6, an account is given of Elihu, and of his excited feelings, when the three friends of Job ceased to answer him. In ver. 6 he himself speaks: he says that he was comparatively young, and that he knew that it was more appropriate that age should speak, vs. 6, 7. Yet he says that he felt himself irresistibly urged to declare his views, ver. 8. Great as was the respect due to age and rank, yet even aged men were not always wise, and might err, and he was therefore emboldened to declare his sentiments, vs. 9, 10. He says that he had carefully attended to all that they had said, and that he had discovered that the three friends of Job had been perfectly silenced, vs. 11-13. It was incumbent on them, he says, to have replied to Job, rather than to have left the task to him, for the words of Job had not been directed against him, but them, ver. 14; but since they did not answer, he felt himself called upon to show his opinion, vs. 15-17. It would be a relief to him to be allowed to speak, for he was full of the subject—like fermenting wine in new bottles, vs. 18-20. He promises that his opinion shall be delivered with entire impartiality, and without respect to any man's person, and with no disposition to flatter, vs. 21, 22.

SO these three men ceased <sup>1</sup> to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes.

1. So these three men ceased to answer Job. Each had had three opportunities of replying to him, though in the last series of the controversy Zophar had

2 Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram:

against Job was his wrath kindled, because he <sup>1</sup> justified himself rather than God.

<sup>1</sup> *his soul.*

been silent. Now all were silent; and though they do not appear in the least to have been convinced, or to have changed their opinion, yet they found no arguments with which to sustain their views. It was this, among other things, which induced Elihu to take up the subject. ¶ *Because he was righteous in his own eyes.* Umbreit expresses the sense of this by adding, "and they could not convince him of his unrighteousness." It was not *merely* because he was righteous in his own estimation, that they ceased to answer him; it was because their arguments had no effect in convincing him, and they had nothing new to say. He seemed to be obstinately bent on maintaining his own good opinion of himself in spite of all their reasoning, and they sat down in silence.

2. *Then was kindled the wrath.* Wrath or anger is commonly represented as kindled, or as burning. ¶ *Of Elihu.* The name *Elihu* (אֵלִיהוּ) means, "God is he;" or, as the word *He* (הוא) is often used by way of eminence to denote the true God, or JEHOVAH, the name is equivalent to saying, "God is my God," or "my God is JEHOVAH." On what account this name was given to him is now unknown. The names which were anciently given, however, were commonly significant, and it was not unusual to incorporate the name of God in those given to men. See Notes, Isa. i. 1. This name was probably given as an expression of piety on the part of his parents. ¶ *The son of Barachel.* The name *Barachel* (בָּרַחֵל) means, "God blesses," and was also probably given as expressive of the piety of his parents, and as furnishing in the name itself a valuable motto which the child would remember. Nothing more is known of him than the name; and the only propriety of remarking on the philology of the names arises from the fact that they seem to

indicate the existence of piety, or of the knowledge of God, on the part of the ancestors of Elihu. ¶ *The Buzite.* Buz was the second son of Nahor, the brother of Abraham, Gen. xxii. 20, 21. A city of the name Buz is mentioned in Jer. xxv. 23, in connexion with Dedan and Tema, cities of Arabia, and it is probable that Barachel, the father of Elihu, was of that city. If this name was given to the place after the son of Nahor, it will follow that Elihu, and consequently Job, must have lived after the time of Abraham. ¶ *Of the kindred of Ram.* Of Ram nothing is certainly known. The Chaldee renders this בֶּן נִיֶּסֶת אַבְרָהָם, *of the race of Abraham.* Some have supposed that the *Ram* here mentioned is the same as the ancestor of David mentioned in Ruth iv. 19, and in the genealogical table in Matt. i. 3, 4, under the name of *Aram.* Others suppose that he was of the family of Nahor, and that the name is the same as אָרָם, *Aram*, mentioned in Gen. xxii. 21. Thus, by aphæresis the Syrians are called רַמִּים, *Rammim* (2 Chron. xxii. 5), instead of אַרְמִים, *Arammim*, as they are usually denominated. Comp. 2 Kings viii. 28. But nothing certain is known of him who is here mentioned. It is worthy of observation that the author of the book of Job has given the genealogy of Elihu with much greater particularity than he has that of either Job or his three friends. Indeed, he has not attempted to trace their genealogy at all. Of Job he does not even mention the name of his father; of his three friends he mentions merely the place where they dwell. Rosenmüller infers, from this circumstance, that Elihu is himself the author of the book, since, says he, it is the custom of the Turks and Persians, in their poems, to weave in, near the end of the poem, the name of the author in an artificial manner. The same view is taken by Lightfoot, *Chronica temporum et ord.*

3 Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

4 Now Elihu had <sup>1</sup> waited till Job had spoken, because they were elder <sup>2</sup> than he.

5 When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of

<sup>1</sup> expected Job in words. <sup>2</sup> elder for days.

*Text. V.T.* A circumstance of this kind, however, is too slight an argument to determine the question of the authorship of the book. It may have been that Elihu was less known than either of the other speakers, and hence there was a propriety in mentioning more particularly his family. Indeed, this fact is morally certain, for he is not mentioned, as the others are, as the "friend" of Job. ¶ *Because he justified himself.* Marg., his soul. So the Hebrew; the word נֶפֶשׁ, *nēphēsh*, soul, being often used to denote oneself. ¶ *Rather than God.* Prof. Lee renders this, "justified himself with God;" and so also Umbreit, Good, and some others. And so the Vulgate renders it—*coram Deo*. The LXX render it, ἐναντίον κυρίου—*against the Lord*; that is, rather than the Lord. The proper translation of the Hebrew (מֵאֵלֹהִים) is undoubtedly, *more than God*; and this was doubtless the idea which Elihu intended to convey. He understood Job as vindicating himself rather than God; as being more willing that aspersions should be cast on the character and government of God, than to confess his own sin.

3. *Because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.* They held Job to be guilty, and yet they were unable to adduce the proof of it, and to reply to what he had said. They still maintained their opinion, though silenced in the argument. They were in that state of mind—not uncommon—in which they obstinately held on to an opinion which they could not vindicate, and believed another to be guilty, though they could not prove it.

these three men, then his wrath was kindled.

6 And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, answered and said, I am <sup>3</sup> young, and ye are very old; <sup>4</sup> wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew you mine opinion.

<sup>3</sup> few of days. a c. 15. 10. <sup>4</sup> feared.

4. *Now Elihu had waited.* Marg., as in Heb., *expected Job in words*. The meaning is plain, that he had waited until all who were older than himself had spoken. ¶ *Because they were elder than he.* Marg., as in Heb., *elder for days*. It appears that they were all older than he was. We have no means of determining their respective ages, though it would seem probable that Eliphaz was the oldest of the three friends, as he uniformly spoke first.

6. *And Elihu—said, I am young.* Marg., *few of days*. The Hebrew is, "I am small (רַעַי) of days;" that is, I am inexperienced. We have no means of ascertaining his exact age, though it is evident that there was a considerable disparity between them and him. ¶ *And ye are very old.* מְבֵטֵן. The word used here is probably derived from the obsolete root בָּטַן, *to be white, hoary*; and hence *to be hoary-headed, or aged*. Comp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17. The whole of the discourses of the friends of Job seem to imply that they were aged men. They laid claim to great experience, and professed to have had opportunities of long observation, and it is probable that they were regarded as sages, who, by the long observation of events, had acquired the reputation of great wisdom. ¶ *Wherefore I was afraid.* He was timid, bashful, diffident. ¶ *And durst not shew you mine opinion.* Marg., *feared*. He had that diffidence to which modesty prompts in the presence of the aged. He had formed his opinion as the argument proceeded, but he did not deem it proper that one so young should interfere, even when he thought he perceived that others were wrong.

Almighty giveth them understanding.

9 Great <sup>d</sup> men are not *always* wise: neither do the aged understand judgment.

4 Mat. 11. 25. 1 Co. 1. 26.

spiration. He had said, in the previous verse, that it was reasonable to expect to find wisdom among the aged and the experienced. But in this he had been disappointed. He now finds that wisdom is not the attribute of rank or station, but that it is the gift of God, and therefore it may be found in a youth. All true wisdom, is the sentiment, is from above; and where the inspiration of the Almighty is, no matter whether with the aged or the young, there is understanding. Elihu undoubtedly means to say, that though he was much younger than they were, and though, according to the common estimate in which the aged and the young were held, he might be supposed to have much less acquaintance with the subjects under consideration, yet, as all true wisdom came from above, he might be qualified to speak. The word "spirit" here, therefore, refers to the spirit which God gives; and the passage is a proof that it was an early opinion that certain men were under the teachings of divine inspiration. The Chaldee renders it רִיחַ נְבִיאִים, *a spirit of prophecy*. ¶ *And the inspiration of the Almighty.* The "breathing" of the Almighty—נִשְׁמַת אֱלֹהִים. The idea was, that God *breathed* this into man, and that this wisdom *was* the breath of God. Comp. Gen. ii. 7; John xx. 22. Sept., πνοή, *breath, breathing*.

9. *Great men are not always wise.* Though wisdom may in general be looked for in them, yet it is not universally true. Great men here denote those who are distinguished for rank, age, authority. ¶ *Neither do the aged understand judgment.* That is, they do not *always* understand it. The word *judgment* here means *right, truth*. They do not always understand what is the exact truth in regard to the divine ad-



10 Therefore I said, Harken to me; I also will shew mine opinion.

11 Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your <sup>1</sup> reasons, whilst ye searched out <sup>2</sup> what to say.

12 Yea, I attended unto you; and, behold, *there was* none of

<sup>1</sup> understandings.

<sup>2</sup> words.

ministration. This is an apology for what he was about to say, and for the fact that one so young should speak. Of the *truth* of what he here said there could be no doubt, and hence there was a propriety that one who was young should also be allowed to express his opinion on important subjects.

11. *I gave ear to your reasons.* Marg., *understandings*. The meaning is, that he had given the most respectful attention to the views which they had expressed, implying that he had been all along present, and had listened to the debate. ¶ *Whilst ye searched out what to say.* Marg., as in Heb., *words*. It is implied here that they had bestowed much attention on what they had said. They had carefully sought out all the arguments at their command to confute Job, and still had been unsuccessful.

12. *There was none of you that convinced Job.* There was no one to produce conviction on his mind, or rather, there was no one to *reprove him by answering him*—בִּקְשָׁתוֹ עֲנִיתָ. They were completely silenced, and had nothing to reply to the arguments which he had advanced, and to his reflections on the divine government.

13. *Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom.* That is, this has been permitted and ordered in such a manner that it might be manifest that the truths which are to convince him come from God and not from man. You were not permitted to refute or convince him, for if you had been, you would have been lifted up with pride, and would have attributed to yourselves what belongs to God. This is in accordance with the

you that convinced Job, or that answered his words:

13 Lest ye should say, We <sup>e</sup> have found out wisdom: God thrusteth him down, not man.

14 Now, he hath not <sup>3</sup> directed his words against me: neither will I answer him with your speeches.

e Jer. 9. 23.

<sup>3</sup> or, ordered.

entire drift of the book, which is to introduce the Almighty himself to settle the controversy when human wisdom failed. They could not arrogate to themselves the claim that they had found out wisdom. They had been completely silenced by Job; they had no power to drive him from his positions; they could not explain the divine dealings so as to settle the great inquiry in which they had been engaged. Elihu proposes to do it, and to do it in such a way as to show that it could be accomplished only by that wisdom which is from above. ¶ *God thrusteth him down, not man.* These are the words of Elihu. The meaning is, "God only can drive Job from his position, and show him the truth, and humble him. The wisdom of man fails. The aged, the experienced, and the wise, have been unable to meet his arguments and bring him down from the positions which he has taken. That work can be done only by God himself, or by the wisdom which he only can give." Accordingly, Elihu, who proposes to meet the arguments of Job, makes no appeal to experience or observation; he does not ground what he says on the maxims of sages, or the results of reflection, but proposes to adduce the precepts of wisdom which God had imparted to him. Ch. xxxiii. 4, 6. Other interpretations have, however, been given of this verse, but the above seems to me the most simple, and most in accordance with the scope of the passage.

14. *Now, he hath not directed his words against me.* Marg., *ordered*. The meaning of this expression is, "I can approach this subject in a wholly dis-

15 They were amazed, they answered no more: they <sup>1</sup> left off speaking.

16 When I had waited, (for they spake not, but stood still, *and* answered no more;)

<sup>1</sup> removed speeches from themselves.

passionate and unprejudiced manner. I have had none of the provocations which you have felt; his harsh and severe remarks have not fallen on me as they have on you, and I can come to the subject with the utmost coolness." The object is to show that he was not irritated, and that he would be under no temptation to use words from the influence of passion, or any other than those which conveyed the simple truth. He seems disposed to admit that Job had given some occasion for severe remarks, by the manner in which he had treated his friends. ¶ *Neither will I answer him with your speeches.* They also had been wrong. They had given way to passion, and had indulged in severity of language, rather than pursued a simple and calm course of argument. From all this, Elihu says he was free, and could approach the subject in the most calm and dispassionate manner. He had had no temptation to indulge in severity of language like theirs, and he would not do it.

15. *They were amazed.* These also are the words of Elihu, and are designed to express his astonishment that the three friends of Job did not answer him. He says that they were completely silenced, and he repeats this to call attention to the remarkable fact, that men who began so confidently, and who still held on to their opinion, had not one word more to say. There is some reason to suppose, from the change of person here from the second to the third, that Elihu turned from them to those who were present, and called *their* attention to the fact that the friends of Job were completely silenced. This supposition, however, is not absolutely necessary, for it is not uncommon in Hebrew poetry to change from the

17 *I said, I will answer also my part, I also will shew mine opinion.*

18 For I am full of <sup>2</sup> matter, the spirit within <sup>3</sup> me constraineth me.

<sup>2</sup> words.

<sup>3</sup> of my belly.

second person to the third, especially where there is any censure or rebuke implied. Comp. ch. xviii. 4. ¶ *They left off speaking.* Marg., *removed speeches from themselves.* The marginal reading accords with the Hebrew. The sense is the same as in the common version, though the Hebrew is more poetic. It is not merely that they ceased to speak, but that they put words at a great distance from them. They could say absolutely nothing. This fact, that they were wholly silent, furnished an ample apology for Elihu to take up the subject.

17. *I also will shew mine opinion.* In this language, as in ver. 6, there is a delicate expression of modesty in the Hebrew which does not appear in our translation. It is אֲנִי — *even I*. "Even one so young, and so humble as I, may be permitted to express my sentiments, when the aged and the great have nothing more to say. It will be no improper intrusion for even *me* to speak when no other one more aged and honourable desires to." In all this we may discern a degree of courtesy, and a delicate sense of propriety, which may be commended to the imitation of all, and especially to the young. In the manners of the pious men whose biography is recorded in the Bible, there is a degree of refinement, delicacy, and courtesy, in their treatment of others, such as will seldom be found even in the most elevated walks of life, and such as religion only can produce. The outward form may be obtained by the world; the living principle is found only in the heart which is imbued with love to God and man.

18. *For I am full of matter.* Marg., as in Heb., *words.* The three friends of Job had been silenced. They had not

19 Behold, my belly is as wine

which hath <sup>1</sup> no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles.

<sup>1</sup> is not opened.

one word more to say. Elihu says that the reverse was true of him. He was full of words, and felt constrained to speak. It was not because he forced himself to do it, nor because he did it as a mere matter of duty, but he was so impressed with the subject, that it would be a relief for him to give utterance to his views. ¶ *The spirit within me.* Referring, probably, to the conviction that it was the Divine Spirit which urged him to speak. See Notes on verse 8. Comp. ch. xxxiii. 4. A similar constraint in regard to the necessity of speaking, when under the influence of the Holy Spirit, is expressed in Jer. xx. 9, "His word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay. Comp. Intro. to Isaiah, § 7. (3.) 'The phrase "within me" is in the margin, as in Heb., *my belly*—where the belly is spoken of as the seat of the mind. See ch. xv. 2. We speak of the *head* as the seat of the intellect, and the *heart* as the seat of the affections. The Hebrews were much in the habit of representing the region of the heart as the seat of all mental operations.

19. *Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent.* Marg., as in Heb., *is not opened*—פָּתוּחַ אֵינִי. The reference is to a bottle, in which there is no opening, or no vent for the fermenting wine to work itself off. It is usual to leave a small hole in barrels and casks when wine, cider, or beer, is fermenting. This is necessary, in order to prevent the cask from bursting. Elihu com-

pares himself to a bottle in which new wine had been put, and where there was no vent for it, and when, in consequence, it was ready to burst. That *new wine* is here intended is apparent from the connexion, and has been so understood by the ancient versions. So Jerome renders it, *Mustum, must*, or new wine. The LXX, ἀσκὸς γλεύκους ζέων διδεδυμένος—"a bottle filled with sweet wine, fermenting, bound;" that is, which has no vent. ¶ *It is ready to burst like new bottles.* The LXX render this, "As the rent (ἰσθηγῶς) bellows of a smith." Why this version was adopted, it is not easy to say. The comparison would be pertinent, but the version could not be made from the present Hebrew text. It is possible that the copy of the Hebrew text which the Septuagint had may have read פָּתוּחַ—*artificers*, instead of פָּתוּחַ—*new*, and then the meaning would be, "as the bottles, or skins of artificers;" that is, as their bellows, which were doubtless at first merely the skins of animals. The reference of Elihu, however, is undoubtedly to skins that were used as bottles, and *new* skins are here mentioned as ready to burst, not because they were more likely to burst than old ones—for that was by no means the case—but because *new* and unfermented wine would naturally be placed in them, thus endangering them. Bottles in the East, it is well known, are usually made of the skins of goats. See Notes on Matth. ix. 17. The annexed engraving represents the usual form of bottles in the East!

20 I will speak, that I may<sup>1</sup> be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer.

<sup>1</sup> breathe.

21 Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man.



The process of manufacturing them at present is this: The skins of the goats are stripped off whole, except at the neck. The holes at the feet and tail are sewed up. They are first stuffed out full, and strained by driving in small billets and chips of oak wood; and then are filled with a strong infusion of oak bark for a certain time, until the hair becomes fixed, and the skin sufficiently tanned. They are sold at different prices, from fifteen up to fifty piastres. Robinson's Bibli. Research. ii. 440. Elihu, perhaps, could not have found a more striking illustration of his meaning. He could no longer restrain himself, and he gave utterance, therefore, to the views which he deemed so important. The word *belly* in this verse (בֶּטֶן) is rendered by Umbreit and Noyes, *bosom*. It not improbably has this meaning, and the reference is to the fact, that in the East the words are uttered forth much more *ab uno pectore*, or are much more *guttural* than with us. The voice seems to come from the lower part of the throat, or from the bosom, in a manner which the people

of Western nations find it difficult to imitate.

20. *I will speak, that I may be refreshed.* Marg., *breathe*. The meaning is, that he would then have room to breathe again; he would feel relieved.

21. *Let me not, I pray you.* This is not to be regarded as an address to them, or a prayer to God, but as an expression of his determination. It is similar to the phrase which we use when we say, "may I never do this;" implying the strongest possible purpose *not* to do it. Elihu means to say, that on no account would he use partiality or flattery in what he said. ¶ *Accept any man's person.* Treat any with partiality. That is, "I will not be influenced by rank, age, wealth, or personal friendship, in what I say. I will state the truth impartially, and will deliver my sentiments with entire freedom." See the phrase explained in the Notes on ch. xiii. 8. ¶ *Neither let me give flattering titles unto man.* The word here used (נָתַתִּי—*not* used in Kal, but found only Piel,) means, to address in a friendly and soothing manner; to speak

22 For <sup>f</sup> I know not to give Maker <sup>g</sup> would soon take me flattering titles; *in so doing* my away.

<sup>f</sup> Gal. 1. 10.

<sup>g</sup> Ps. 12. 2, 3.

kindly to any one, Isa. xlv. 5; xlv. 4; and then, to flatter. That is, undoubtedly, its meaning here. Elihu says he did not know how to flatter any one. He meant to state the exact truth; to treat each one impartially; and not to be influenced by the rank or wealth of those whom he addressed. He meant to deal in plain and simple truth.

22. *For I know not to give flattering titles.* I do not know how to flatter. It is not in my character; it has not been my habit. ¶ *In so doing.* These words are not in the Hebrew, and they greatly mar the sense, and give a different idea from that which was intended by the speaker. ¶ *My Maker would soon take me away.* Or, rather, "My Maker will soon take me away." That is, "I know that I must soon be removed, and must stand before my Maker. I must give an account for all that I say. Knowing that I am to go to the realities of another state of being, I cannot flatter men. I must tell them the exact and simple truth." There could be no better preventive of flattery than this. The conviction that we are soon to appear before God, where all are on a level, and where every mask will be stripped off, and everything appear as it is, would prevent us from ascribing to others qualities which they know they

do not possess, and from giving them titles which will only exalt them in their own estimation, and hide the truth from their minds. Titles which properly belong to men, and which pertain to office, religion does not forbid us to confer—for the welfare of the community is promoted by a proper respect for the names and offices of those who rule. But no good end is answered in ascribing to men titles as *mere* matters of distinction, which serve to keep before them the idea of their own talents or importance; or which lead them to forget that they, like others, are soon to be "taken away," and called to give up their account in another world. The deep conviction that we are all soon to try the realities of a bed of death and of the grave, and that we are to go to a world where there is no delusion, and where the ascription of qualities to us here which do not belong to us will be of no avail, would prompt to a wish to state always the simple truth. Under that conviction, we should never ascribe to another any quality of beauty, strength, or talent, any name or title, as to leave him for one moment under a deception about himself. If this rule were followed, what a change would it produce in the social, the political, the literary, and even the religious world!

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

THE discourse in this chapter is directed entirely to Job. In the following chapter, Elihu addresses particularly the friends of Job. In this chapter, the main design is to convince Job that he had erred in the views which he had expressed of God, and to state the true design of affliction—which he supposes had not been understood either by him or his friends. The three friends of Job regarded it as a mere punishment—as always expressive of the divine displeasure. Job had resisted this opinion, but was not able to state *why* good men are afflicted. Sometimes he seemed to suppose that it must be resolved into mere sovereignty; sometimes he had indulged in language of severity in regard to God; and sometimes he held that God would yet come forth and vindicate the afflicted, and appear as the friend of his people. Elihu interposes, and says that neither understood the true object of affliction. It was to accomplish what nothing else would do; to produce effects on the mind and life which could not be reached in any other way; and if the afflicted would turn from their sins, God would be still merciful to them. In stating these views, Elihu dwells on the following points:—

I. He addresses himself to Job, and urges reasons why he should listen to what he had to say, vs. 1—7. He says that he would speak in uprightness and truth; that the Spirit of God had taught him, and that he was in God's stead; and that as Job had often wished that he might be permitted to bring his cause before God, he now had the opportunity, and in such a way that he would not be overawed by the divine majesty, as if he had visibly appeared. If he desired to vindicate himself, he had now the opportunity.

II. He refers, briefly, to the sentiments which Job had advanced, and particularly to his severe reflections on the divine dealings, as if God had been unjust and severe, vs. 8—11. Job, he says, had maintained his own perfect purity; he had denied that he deserved what had come upon him; he had charged God with "finding occasions" against him, and with having pleasure in bringing trials on him without any sufficient cause; and had said that God regarded him as an enemy, and narrowly watched all his paths.

III. Elihu proposes, therefore, to meet all this, and show Job that his opinion was unjust, and to state to him the real design of his affliction, to suggest some principle which would explain it all without these injurious reflections on the character of God. This occupies the remainder of the chapter, vs. 12—33. In doing this, he adverts to the following points:—

(1.) He says that Job could not be vindicated in what he had said; that God was greater than man; and that even if man could not see the reason of his doings, he ought to acquiesce in them, since God did not give account of any of his matters, vs. 12, 13.

(2.) He observes that God speaks in various ways to men; that he often addresses them by direct revelation in the visions of the night; and that his object is to benefit man—to withdraw him from an evil purpose, and to make him humble, vs. 14—17.

(3.) In the prosecution of the same object, and with a view to the same result, he often visits men with affliction. His object is to keep back man from the pit, and he therefore chastens him so that his life abhors bread, so that his flesh pines away, and so that he draws near to the grave, vs. 18—22.

(4.) If this is effectual—if man receives it in a proper manner, and is disposed to come back to God, he is willing to receive and forgive him. *Here is the real clue to the design of affliction.* It is to bring the offender to repentance, and to save his soul. If the afflicted man has some one to explain the design of trial, then God will be gracious; his flesh will be restored fresher than an infant's, and if he confesses his sin, God will be merciful to him, and save him, vs. 23—28. All these things, he says, are done by God to accomplish a single purpose—to bring back man from his wanderings, and to restore him to the favor of Heaven, vs. 29, 30.

(5.) In the conclusion of his address to Job, Elihu calls on him to reply to this, if he had any answer to make. He professes a desire to vindicate Job if he could, but says that if he had nothing to say in reply, he would teach him what true wisdom was, vs. 31—33.

**W**HEREFORE, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches, and hearken to all my words.

2 Behold, now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken

in my <sup>1</sup> mouth.

3 My words <sup>a</sup> shall be of the uprightness of my heart: and my lips shall utter knowledge <sup>b</sup> clearly.

<sup>1</sup> palate.    <sup>a</sup> Pr. 8. 6—9.    <sup>b</sup> Ti. 2. 7, 8.

1. *Wherefore, Job, I pray thee.* In the next chapter he addresses the three friends of Job. This is addressed particularly to him. ¶ *My speeches.* Heb., *my words*—*קָוִי*. This is the usual word in the Aramaean languages to express a saying or discourse, though in Hebrew it is only a poetic form. The meaning is, not that he would address separate speeches, or distinct discourses, to Job, but that he called on him to attend to what he had to say.

2. *My tongue hath spoken in my mouth.* Marg., *palate*. The meaning is, that since he had ventured to speak, and had actually commenced, he would utter only that which was worthy to be heard. This is properly the commencement of

his argument, for all that he had before said was merely an introduction. The word *palate*—"in my palate" (*קָוִי*) is here used because of the importance of that organ in the act of speaking. Perhaps, also, there may be reference to the fact that the Hebrews made much more use of the lower organs of enunciation—the palate, and the throat, than we do, and much less use of the teeth and lips. Hence their language was strongly guttural.

3. *My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart.* I will speak in sincerity. I will utter nothing that shall be hollow and hypocritical. What I speak shall be the real suggestion of my heart—what I feel and know to be true.

4 The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

5 If thou canst answer me, set *thy words* in order before me,

Perhaps Elihu was the more anxious to make this point entirely clear, because the three friends of Job might be supposed to have laid themselves open to the suspicion that they were influenced by passion or prejudice; that they had maintained their opinions from mere obstinacy and not from conviction; and that they had been sometimes disposed to cavil. Elihu claims that all that *he* was about to say would be entirely sincere. ¶ *Shall utter knowledge clearly.* Shall state things just as they are, and give the true solution of the difficulties which have been felt in regard to the divine dealings. His object is to guard himself wholly from the suspicion of partiality.

4. *The Spirit of God hath made me.* See Notes, ch. xxxii. 8. There is an evident allusion in this verse to the mode in which man was created, when God breathed into him the breath of life and he became a living being. Gen. ii. 7. But it is not quite clear why Elihu adverts here to the fact that God had made him, or what is the bearing of this fact on what he proposed to say. The most probable supposition is, that he means to state that he is, like Job, a man; that both were formed in the same way—from the same breathing of the Almighty, and from the same clay (ver. 6); and that although he had undertaken to speak to Job in God's stead (ver. 6), yet Job had no occasion to fear that he would be overawed and confounded by the Divine Majesty. He had dreaded that, if he should be permitted to bring his case before him, (Notes, ver. 7,) but Elihu says that now he would have no such thing to apprehend. Though it would be, in fact, the same thing as carrying the matter before God—since he came in his name, and meant to state the true principles of his government, yet Job would be also really conducting the cause *with a man* like himself, and might, unawed, enter

stand up.

6 Behold, I *am* according to *thy* <sup>1</sup> wish in <sup>c</sup> God's stead: I also *am* <sup>2</sup> formed out of the clay.

<sup>1</sup> *mouth.*

c c. 9. 32, 33.

<sup>2</sup> *cut.*

with the utmost freedom into the statement of his views.

5. *If thou canst answer me.* The meaning of this verse is this: "The controversy between you and me, if you choose to reply, shall be conducted in the most equitable manner, and on the most equal terms. I will not attempt, as your three friends have done, to overwhelm you with reproaches, nor will I attempt to overawe you as God would do, so that you could not reply. I am a man like yourself, and desire that if anything can be said against what I have to advance, it should be offered with the utmost fairness and freedom." ¶ *Stand up.* That is, "maintain your position, unless you are convinced by my arguments. I wish to carry nothing by mere authority or power."

6. *Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead.* Marg., as in Heb., *mouth.* The *mouth* is that by which we express our desires, and the word here is equivalent to *wish*. Some have, however, rendered this differently. Umbreit translates it, *Ich bin, wie du, von Gott—I am, as thou art, from God.* So Noyes, "I, like thee, am a creature of God." Wemyss, "I am thine equal in the sight of God." Coverdale, "Behold, before God am I even as thou, for I am fashioned and made even of the same mould." The Vulgate renders it, "Behold, God made me as he made thee; and of the same clay am I formed." So the LXX, "From clay am I formed as well as thou, and we are formed from the same." This interpretation seems to be demanded also by the parallelism, where he says that he was made of the same clay with Job; that is, that he was a man like him. Still, it seems to me, that the fair and obvious meaning of the Hebrew is that which is expressed in our common version. The Hebrew is, *אֲנִי כְּפִי מִלֵּךְ*—"lo, I am, according to thy mouth [word, or wish] for God;" that is, I am in his place; I

7 Behold, my <sup>d</sup> terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.

¶ c. 9. 34.

speaking in his name; I am so commissioned by him that you may regard yourself as, in fact, speaking to him when you address his ambassador. This will also accord with what is said in ver. 7, and with what Job had so earnestly desired, that he might be allowed to bring his cause directly before God. See Notes, ch. xiii. 3. ¶ *I also am formed out of the clay.* Marg., cut. The figure is taken from the act of the potter, who cuts off a portion of clay which he moulds into a vessel, and there is manifest allusion here to the statement in Genesis, that God made man of the dust of the ground. The meaning in this connexion is, "Though I am in the place of God, and speak in his name, yet I am also a man, made of the same frail material as yourself. In me, therefore, there is nothing to overawe or confound you as there would be if God spake himself."

7. *Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid.* Job had earnestly desired to carry his cause directly before God, but he had expressed the apprehension that he would overawe him by his majesty, so that he would not be able to manage his plea with the calmness and self-possession which were desirable. He had, therefore, expressed it as his earnest wish, that if he were so permitted, God would not take advantage of his majesty and power to confound him. See Notes, ch. xiii. 21. Elihu now says, that the wish of Job in this could be amply gratified. Though he spake in the name of God, and it might be considered that the case was fairly carried before him, yet he was also a man. He was the fellow, the equal with Job. He was made of the same clay, and he could not overawe him as the Almighty himself might do. There would be, therefore, in his case all the advantage of carrying the cause directly up to God, and yet none of the disadvantage which Job apprehended, and which must ensue when a mere man undertook to manage his own cause

with the Almighty. ¶ *Neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.* Alluding, evidently, to what Job had said, ch. xiii. 21, that the hand of God was heavy upon him, so that he could not conduct his cause in such a manner as to do justice to himself. He had asked, therefore, (see Notes on that place,) as a special favor, if he was permitted to carry his cause before God, that his hand would be so far lightened that he could be able to state his arguments with the force which they required. Elihu says now that that wish could be gratified. Though he was in the place of God, yet he was a man, and his hand would not be upon him to crush him down so that he could not do justice to himself. The noun rendered *hand* (כַּף) does not elsewhere occur. The verb כָּפָה occurs once in Prov. xvi. 26, where it is rendered "*craveth*"—"He that laboreth, laboreth for himself; for his mouth craveth it of him"—where the margin is, *boweth unto*. The word in Arabic means to load a beast of burden; to bend, to make to bow under a load; and then to impel, to urge on; and hence it means "his mouth, i. e., hunger, impels, or urges him on to labor." In like manner the meaning of the word here (כָּפָה) may be a load or burden, meaning "my load, i. e., my weight, dignity, authority, shall not be burdensome or oppressive to you." But the parallel place in ch. xiii. 21, is "hand," and that meaning seems to be required here. Kimchi supposes it is the same as כַּף—*hand*, and the LXX have so rendered it, ἡ χεὶρ μου. In the view of the speech of Elihu thus far, we cannot but remark that there is much that is peculiar, and especially that he lays decided claim to inspiration. Though speaking for God, yet he was in human nature, and Job might speak to him as a friend, unawed and unterrified by any dread of overwhelming majesty and power. On what grounds Elihu based these high pretensions does not appear, and his claim to



8 Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing, <sup>1</sup> and I have heard the voice of *thy* <sup>c</sup> words, *saying*,

9 I am clean without trans-

<sup>1</sup> ears.

† e. 10. 7; 16. 17; 23. 11, 12; 27. 5, 6; 29. 14.

them is the more remarkable from his youth. It does not require the aid of a very lively imagination to fancy a resemblance between him and the Lord Jesus—the great mediator between God and man—and were that mode of interpretation which delights to find types and figures everywhere, a mode that could be vindicated, there is no character in the Old Testament that would more obviously suggest that of the Redeemer than the character of Elihu. His comparative youth, his modesty, his humility, would suggest it. The fact that he comes in to utter his sentiments where age and wisdom had failed to suggest the truth, and when pretended sages were confounded and silenced, would suggest it. The fact that he claims to be in the place of God, and that a cause might be managed before him *as if* it were before God, and yet that he was a man like others, and that no advantage would be taken to overawe by mere majesty and power, are all circumstances that would constitute a strong and vivid resemblance. But I see no *evidence* that this was the design of the introduction of the character of Elihu, and interesting as the comparison might be, and desirable as it may seem that the book of Job should be found to contain some reference to the great work of mediation, yet the just and stern laws of interpretation exclude such a reference in the absence of proof, and do not allow us to luxuriate in the conceptions of fancy, however pious the reflections might be, or to search for typical characters where the Spirit of inspiration has not revealed them as such, however interesting or edifying might be the contemplation.

8. *Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing.* Marg., as in Heb., *ears*. This shows that Elihu had been present during the debate, and had attentively listened to what had been said. He now takes up the main point on which he

gression, I *am* innocent; neither *is there* iniquity in me.

10 Behold, he findeth occasions against me, he <sup>f</sup> counteth me for his enemy,

f c. 19. 11.

supposed that Job had erred—the attempt to justify himself. He professes to adduce the very words which he had used, and disclaims all design of judging from mere hearsay.

9. *I am clean.* I am pure and holy. ¶ *Without transgression.* Job had not used these very expressions, nor had he intended to maintain that he was absolutely free from sin. See ch. ix. 20. He had maintained that he was not chargeable with the transgressions of which his three friends maintained that he was guilty, and in doing that he had used strong language, and language which even *seemed* to imply that he was without transgression. See ch. ix. 30; x. 7; xiii. 23; xvi. 17. ¶ *I am innocent.* The word here used (קָרָא) is from the verb, קָרָא—to cover, to protect; and also, as a secondary meaning, from the Arabic, to rub, to wipe off; to wash away, to lave. Hence it denotes that which is rubbed clean, washed, pure—and then innocent. The word occurs only in this place. It is not the exact language which Job had used, and there seems to be some injustice done him in saying that he had employed such language. Elihu means, doubtless, that he had used language which *implied* this, or which was equivalent to it.

10. *Behold, he findeth occasions against me.* That is, God. This is not exactly the language of Job, though much that he had said had seemed to imply this. The idea is, that God sought opportunity to oppose him; that he was desirous to find in him some ground or reason for punishing him; that he wished to be hostile to him, and was narrowly on the watch to find an opportunity which would justify his bringing calamity upon him. The word rendered *occasions*—קָרָא, is from קָרָא, in Hiphil קָרָא—to refuse, decline; to

11 He <sup>s</sup> putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh <sup>h</sup> all my paths.

12 Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee, that

g c. 13. 27.

h Da. 4. 35.

hinder, restrain, Num. xxx. 6, 9, 12; and hence the noun means, a holding back, a withdrawal, an alienation; and hence the idea is, that God sought to be alienated from Job. The Vulgate renders it, "He seeks complaints (*querelas*) against me." The LXX, *μῆμῖν*—accusation. Umbreit, *Feindschaft*, enmity. So Gesenius and Noyes. ¶ *He counteth me for his enemy.* This is language which Job had used. See ch. xix. 11.

11. *He putteth my feet in the stocks.* This also is language which Job had used. See ch. xiii. 27. ¶ *He marketh all my paths.* In ch. xiii. 27, "Thou lookest narrowly unto all my paths." See Notes on that verse.

12. *Behold, in this thou art not just.* In this view of God, and in these reflections on his character and government. Such language in regard to the Deity cannot be vindicated; such views cannot be right. It cannot be that he wishes to be the foe of man; that he watches with a jealous eye every movement, with a view to find something that will justify him in bringing heavy calamities upon his creatures, or that he sets himself as a spy upon the way in which man goes, in order to find out something that shall make it proper for him to treat him as an enemy. It cannot be denied that Job had indulged in language making substantially such representations of God, and that he had thus given occasion for the reproof of Elihu. It can as little be denied that such thoughts frequently pass through the minds of the afflicted, though they do not express them in words, nor is it less doubtful that they should be at once banished from the soul. *They cannot be true.* It CANNOT be that God thus regards and treats his creatures; that he *wishes* to find "occasion" in them to make it proper for him to bring calamity upon them, or that he

God is greater than man.

13 Why dost thou strive <sup>l</sup> against him? for he <sup>l</sup> giveth not account <sup>k</sup> of any of his matters.

l Isa. 45. 9.

l answereth not.

k Ps. 62. 11.

desires to regard them as his foes. ¶ *I will answer thee.* That is, "I will show that this view is unjust." This he does in the subsequent verses, by stating what he supposes to be the real design of afflictions, and by showing that God in these trials had a good and benevolent object. ¶ *That—?* Rather, *because*, or *for*. The object is not to show that God was greater than man—for that could not be a matter of information, but to show that *because* he was far above man he had great and elevated objects in his dealings with him, and man should submit to him without a murmur. ¶ *God is greater than man.* The meaning of this is, that man should suppose that God has good reasons for all that he does, and that he might not be qualified to understand the reason of his doings. He should therefore acquiesce in his arrangements, and not call in question the equity of the divine dealings. In all our trials it is well to remember that *God is greater than we* are. He knows what is best; and though we may not be able to see the reason of his doings, yet it becomes us to acquiesce in his superior wisdom.

13. *Why dost thou strive against him?* By refusing to submit to him, and by calling in question his wisdom and goodness. ¶ *For he giveth not account of any of his matters.* Marg., as in Heb., *answereth not.* The idea is, that it is as useless as it is improper to contend with God. He does his own pleasure, and deals with man as he deems best and right. The reason of his doings he does not state, nor has man any power to extort from him a statement of the causes why he afflicts us. This is still true. The reason of his doings he does not often make known to the afflicted, and it is impossible to know *now* the causes why he has brought on us the calamity with which we are visited. The general reasons why men are of-

14 For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not.

afflicted may be better known now than they were in the time of Elihu, for successive revelations have thrown much light on that subject. But when he comes and afflicts us as individuals; when he takes away a beloved child; when he cuts down the young, the vigorous, the useful, and the pious, it is often impossible to understand *why* he has done it. All that we can do then is to **SUBMIT** to his sovereign will, and to believe that though we cannot see the reasons why he has done it, yet that does not prove that there are no reasons, or that we may *never* be permitted to understand them. We are required to submit to *his will*, not to *our own reason*; to acquiesce because *he does it*, not because *we see it to be right*. If we always understood the reasons why he afflicts us, our resignation would be not to the *will of God*, but to our own knowledge of what is right; and God, therefore, often passes before us in clouds and thick darkness, to see whether we have sufficient confidence in him to believe that he does right, even when we cannot see or understand the reason of his doings. So a child reposes the highest confidence in a parent, when he believes that the parent will do right, though he cannot understand why he does it, and the parent does not choose to let him know. May not a father see reasons for what he does which a child could not understand, or which it might be proper for him to withhold from him?

14. *For God speaketh once.* The object of what is here said is, to show the reason why God brings affliction upon men, or to explain the principles of his government, which Elihu supposed had been sadly misunderstood by Job and his friends. The reason why he brings affliction, Elihu says, is because all other means of reclaiming and restraining men fail. He communicates his will to them; he speaks to them again and again in dreams and visions;

15 In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed;

he warns them of the error of their course (vs. 14—17), and when this is all ineffectual, he brings upon them affliction. He lays them upon their bed, where they must reflect, and where there is hope that they may be reclaimed and reformed, vs. 18—28. ¶ *Yea twice.* He does not merely admonish him once. He repeats the admonition when man refuses to hear him the first time, and takes all the methods which he can by admonition and warning to withdraw him from his wicked purpose, and to keep him from ruin. ¶ *Yet man perceiveth it not.* Or, rather, “Although he does not perceive it or attend to it.” Though the sinner is regardless of the admonition, yet still God repeats it, and endeavors to save him from the commission of the crimes which would lead him to ruin. This is designed to show the patience and forbearance of God, and how many means he takes to save the sinner from ruin. Of the *truth* of what Elihu here says, there can be no difference of opinion. It is one of the great principles of the divine administration that the sinner is often warned, though he heeds it not; and that God sends repeated admonitions even when men will not regard them, but are bent on their own ruin.

15. *In a dream.* This was one of the methods by which the will of God was made known in the early periods of the world. See Notes on ch. iv. 12—17. And for a fuller account of this method of communicating the divine will, see Introduction to Isaiah, § 7. (2.) ¶ *In a vision of the night.* Notes, ch. iv. 13. Comp. Intro. to Isa. § 7. (4.) ¶ *When deep sleep falleth upon men.* This may be designed to intimate more distinctly that it was from God. It was not the effect of disturbed and broken rest; not such fancies as come into the mind between sleeping and waking, but the visitations of the divine Spirit in the profoundest repose of the night. The word rendered “deep sleep” (מְנוּמָה) is

16 Then he <sup>1</sup> openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction,

<sup>1</sup> *revealeth, or uncovereth.*

one that denotes the most profound repose. It is not merely sleep, but it is sleep of the soundest kind—that kind when we do not usually dream. See Notes on ch. iv. 13. The Chaldee has here rendered it correctly, *שנת עמוקה*—*sleep that is deep*. The LXX render it, *δεινός φόβος*—*dread horror*. The Syriac renders this verse, “Not by the lips does he teach; by dreams and visions of the night,” &c. ¶ *In slumberings upon the bed*. The word rendered *slumberings* (*הנחמ*) means a light sleep, as contradistinguished from very profound repose. Our word *slumber* conveys the exact idea. The meaning of the whole is, that God speaks to men when their senses are locked in repose—alike in the profound sleep when they do not ordinarily dream, and in the gentle and light slumbers when the sleep is easily broken. In what way, however, they were to distinguish such communications from ordinary dreams, we have no information. It is scarcely necessary to remark that what is here and elsewhere said in the Scriptures about dreams, is no warrant for putting any confidence in them now as if they were revelations from heaven.

16. *Then he openeth the ears of men.* Marg., as in Heb., *revealeth, or uncovereth*. The idea is, that he then reveals to the ear of man important admonitions or counsels. He communicates valuable truth. We are not to understand this as saying that the sleeper actually *hears* God speak, but as the ear is the organ of hearing, it is employed here to denote that God then communicates his will to men. In what way he had access to the souls of men by dreams, it is impossible to explain. ¶ *And sealeth their instruction*. Literally, “In their admonition he seals;” or he affixes a seal. The idea is, that he makes the admonition or instruction as secure as if a seal were affixed to it. A seal ratified or confirmed a contract,

17 That he may withdraw <sup>1</sup> man from his <sup>2</sup> purpose, and hide pride <sup>m</sup> from man.

l c. 17. 11. <sup>2</sup> *work.* m Isa. 23. 9.

a will, or a deed, and the sense here is, that the communications of God to the soul were as firm as if they had been ratified in like manner. Or possibly it may mean, that the warnings of God were communicated to the soul like a sealed letter or message unknown to any other; that is, were made privately to the individual himself in the slumbers of the night. Others have understood the word rendered *instruction*, as denoting *castigation*, or *punishment*, and according to that explanation, the meaning would be, that he announces to them certain punishment if they continued in sin; he made it as certain to them as if it were ratified by a seal. So Rosenmüller and Mercer. Schulzens supposes it to be equivalent to *inspires* them, or communicates instruction by inspiration, as if it were confirmed and ratified by a seal. He observes that the Arabic word *حتم*

—*hlatham* is often used in the Koran, meaning to *inspire*. The LXX render it, *αὐτοὺς ἐξέφύβησεν*—“he terrifies them”—where they evidently read *חמ* instead of *חמ*. The sense is, that God communicates warnings to men on their beds, in a manner as solemn and impressive as if it were ratified with a seal, and made as secure as possible.

17. *That he may withdraw man from his purpose.* Marg., *work*. The sense is plain. God designs to warn him of the consequences of executing a plan of iniquity. He alarms him by showing him that his course will lead to punishment, and by representing to him in the night visions, the dreadful woes of the future world into which he is about to plunge. The *object* is to deter him from committing the deed of guilt which he had contemplated, and to turn him to the paths of righteousness. Is it unreasonable to suppose that the same thing may occur now, and that God may have a purpose in the dreams

18 He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from <sup>1</sup> perishing by the sword.

<sup>1</sup> *passing by.*

which often visit the man who has formed a plan of iniquity, or who is living a life of sin? It cannot be doubted that such men often have alarming dreams; that these dreams are such as are fitted to deter them from the commission of their contemplated wickedness; and that, in fact, they not unfrequently do it. What shall hinder us from supposing that God *intends* that the workings of the mind when the senses are locked in repose, shall be the means of alarming the guilty, and of leading them to reflection? Why should not *mind* thus be its own admonisher, and be made the instrument of restraining the guilty then, as really as by its sober reasonings and reflections when awake? Many a wicked man has been checked in a career of wickedness by a frightful dream; and not a few have been brought to a degree of reflection which has resulted in sound conversion, by the alarm caused on the mind by having the consequences of a career of wickedness traced out in the visions of the night. The case of Colonel Gardiner cannot be forgotten—though in that instance it was rather “a vision of the night” than a dream. He was meditating an act of wickedness, and was alone in his room awaiting the appointed hour. In the silence of the night, and in the solitude of his room, he *seemed* to see the Saviour on the cross. This view, however it may be accounted for, restrained him from the contemplated act of wickedness, and he became an eminently pious man. See Doddridge’s *Life of Col. Gardiner*. The mind, with all its faculties, is under the control of God, and no one can demonstrate that he does not make its actings, even in the wanderings of a dream, the designed means of checking the sinner, and of saving the soul. ¶ *And hide pride from man.* Probably the particular thing which Elihu here referred to was pride

19 He <sup>n</sup> is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong *pain*:

<sup>n</sup> Ps. 107. 17.

and arrogance towards God; or an insolent bearing towards him, and a reliance on one’s own merits. This was the particular thing in Job which Elihu seems to have thought required animadversion, and probably he meant to intimate that all men had such communications from God by dreams as to save them from such arrogance.

18. *He keepeth back his soul from the pit.* The word *soul* in the Hebrew is often equivalent to *self*, and the idea is, that he keeps *the man* from the pit in this manner. The *object* of these warnings is to keep him from rushing on to his own destruction. The word rendered *pit*—חֶמְדָּה, properly means *a pit*, or *pitfall*, in which traps are laid for wild animals, Ps. vii. 16, ix. 16; then a cistern that is miry, Job ix. 31; a prison, Isa. li. 14; then the grave, or sepulchre, as being often a cavern, Job xvii. 14; Ps. xxx. 10. See vs. 28, 30, of this chapter. It evidently means here *the grave*, and the sense is, that God thus warns men against pursuing a course of conduct which would lead them to destruction, or would speedily terminate their lives. ¶ *And his life from perishing by the sword.* Marg., *passing by*. The meaning of the Hebrew may be, “to keep his life from *passing away* by the sword;” as if the sword were the means by which the life or soul *passed* from the body. The word rendered *sword* here—חֶמְדָּה, is from חָפַץ—to *send*, *cast*, *hurl*, and the reference is rather to something *sent*, as of an arrow, dart, javelin, than to the sword. The sense is not materially varied, and the idea referred to is that of a violent death. The meaning is, that God by these warnings would keep a man from such a course of life as would lead to a death by violence—either by punishment for his crime, or by being cut off in war.

19. *He is chastened also with pain.* As another means of checking and restrain-

20 So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul <sup>1</sup> dainty meat.

21 His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his

<sup>1</sup> *meat of desire.*

ing him from the commission of sin. When the warnings of the night fail, and when he is bent on a life of sin, then God lays him on a bed of pain, and he is brought to reflection there. There he has an opportunity to think of his life, and of all the consequences which must follow from a career of iniquity. This involves the main inquiry before the disputants. It was, why men were afflicted. The three friends of Job had said that it was a full proof of wickedness, and that when the professedly pious were afflicted, it was demonstrative of insincerity and hypocrisy. Job had called this position in question, and proved that it could not be so, but still was at a loss *why* it was. Elihu now says, that affliction is a part of a *disciplinary government*; that it is one of the means which God adopts, when warnings are ineffectual, to restrain men and to bring them to reflection and repentance. This appears to have been a view which was almost entirely new to them. ¶ *And the multitude of his bones with strong pain.* The bones, as has before been remarked, it was supposed might be the seat of the acutest pain. See Notes on ch. xxx. 17. Comp. ch. xx. 11, vii. 15, xxx. 30. The meaning here is, that the frame was racked with intense suffering in order to admonish men of sin, to save them from plunging into deeper transgression, and to bring them to repentance.

20. *So that his life abhorreth bread.* It is a common effect of sickness to take away the appetite. Elihu here regards it as a part of the wholesome discipline of the sufferer. He has no relish for the comforts of life. ¶ *And his soul dainty meat.* Marg., *meat of desire.* The Hebrew is, "food of desire." The word rendered *meat* (מִתְּשֶׁה) does not denote animal food only, but any kind of food. So the old English word *meat* was used. The idea is, that the sick man loathes

bones *that* were not seen stick out.

22 Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.

the most delicate food. It is a part of his discipline that the pleasure which he had in the days of his health is now taken away.

21. *His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen.* He wastes away. His flesh, once vigorous, beautiful, and fair, now disappears. This is not a mere description of the nature of his sickness, but it is a description of the disciplinary arrangements of God. It is an important part of his affliction, as a part of the discipline, that his flesh vanishes, and that his appearance is so changed that he becomes repulsive to the view. ¶ *And his bones that were not seen, stick out.* His bones were before invisible. They were carefully concealed by the rounded muscle, and by the fat which filled up the interstices, so that they were not offensive to the view. But now the protuberances of his bones can be seen, for God has reduced him to the condition of a skeleton. This is one of the common effects of disease, and this shows the strength of the discipline which God contemplates. The parts of the human frame which in health are carefully hid from the view, as being unsightly, become now prominent, and can be hidden no longer. *One* design is to humble us; to take away the pride which delighted in the round and polished limb, the rose on the cheek, the ruby lip, and the smooth forehead; and to show us what we shall soon be in the grave.

22. *Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave.* That is, he himself does, for the word *soul* is often used to denote self. ¶ *And his life to the destroyers—* לְמַחֲרָיִם. Literally, "to those causing death." The interpretation commonly given of this is, "the angels of death," who were supposed to come to close human life. Comp. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16, 17. But it probably refers to diseases and pangs as having power to terminate life,

23 If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one

among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness:

and being the cause of the close of life. The meaning is, that the afflicted man comes very near to those acute sufferings which terminate life, and which by personification are here represented as the authors of death.

23. *If there be a messenger with him.*

This part of the speech of Elihu has given rise to scarcely less diversity of opinion, and to scarcely less discussion, than the celebrated passage in ch. xix. 25—27. Almost every interpreter has had a peculiar view of its meaning, and of course it is very difficult, if not impossible, to determine its true sense. Before the opinions which have been entertained are specified, and an attempt made to determine the true sense of the passage, it may be of interest to see how it is presented in the ancient versions, and what light they throw on it. The Vulgate renders it, "If there is for him an angel speaking, one of thousands, that he may announce the righteousness of the man; he will pity him, and say, Deliver him, that he descends not into corruption: I have found him in whom I will be propitious to him"—*inveni in quo ei propitius*. The Septuagint translators render it, "If there be a thousand angels of death (*ἄγγελοι θανάτηφόροι*), not one of them can [mortally] wound him (*τρώσῃ αὐτόν*.) If he determine in his heart to turn to the Lord, when he shall have shown man his charge against him, and shown his folly, he will support him that he may not fall to death, and renew his body, like plastering on a wall, (*ὥσπερ ἀλοιφήν ἐπὶ τοίχου*), and will fill his bones with marrow, and make his flesh soft like an infant." The Chaldee renders it, "If there is merit (*מִצָּדִיק*) in him, an angel is prepared, a comforter (*מְנַחֵם*, *Paraclete*), [Greek, *παράκλητος*,] one among a thousand accusers, (*ἐκ τῶν χίλων*) [Greek, *κατήγορος*,] that he may announce to man his rectitude. And he spares him and says, Redeem him, that he may not descend to corruption; I have found a ransom." Schultens has

divided the opinions which have been entertained of the passage into three classes. They are, I. The opinions of those who suppose that by the messenger, or angel, here, there is reference to a *man*. Of those who hold this opinion, he enumerates no less than *seven* classes. They are such as these: (1) those who hold that the man referred to is some distinguished instructor sent to the sick to teach them the will of God, an opinion held by Munster and Isidorus; (2) those who refer it to a prophet, as Junius et Tremilii; (3) Codarcus supposes that there is reference to the case of Abimelech, who was made sick on account of Sarah, and that the man referred to was a prophet, who announced to him that God was righteous. Gen. xx. The 4th and 5th cases slightly vary from these specified. (6) Those who hold that Elihu referred to himself as being the angel, or messenger, that God had sent to make known to Job the truth in regard to the divine government, and the reason why he afflicts men. Of this opinion was Gusset, and we may add that this is the opinion of Umbreit. (7) Those who suppose that some faithful servant of God is intended, without specifying who, who comes to the sick and afflicted, and announces to them the reason of the Divine dispensations. II. The second class of opinions is, that *an angel* is referred to here, and that the meaning is, that God employs angelic beings to communicate his will to men, and especially to the afflicted—to make known to them the reason *why* they are afflicted, and the assurance that he is willing to show mercy to them if they will repent. Of those who hold this, Schultens mentions (1) the LXX, who render it, "the angels of death;" (2) the Chaldee Paraphrast, who understands it of the "comforting angel"—the Paraclete; (3) the opinion of Mercer, who supposes it to refer to a good angel, who, though there be a thousand of a contrary description, if he announces the will of God, and shows the true

reason why he afflicts men, may be the means of reclaiming them; (4) the opinion of Clerc, who regards it as a mere *hypothesis* of Elihu, saying that on the supposition that an angel would thus visit men, they might be reclaimed; (5) the opinion of Grotius, who supposes it refers to angels regarded as mediators, who perform their office of mediation in two ways—by admonishing men, and by praying for them. This was also the opinion of Maimonides. (6) The opinion of Jerome, who supposes that it refers to the angel standing in the presence of God, and who is employed by him in admonishing and correcting mankind. III. The third class of opinions consists of those who refer it to the Messiah. Of those who have held this opinion, the following may be mentioned: Cocceius—*of course*; Calovius, Schmidius, and Augustine. Amidst this diversity of sentiment, it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine the real meaning of the passage. The general sentiment is indeed plain. It is, that God visits men with affliction in order to restrain them from sin, and to correct them when they have erred. It is not from hostility to them; not from mere justice; not because he delights in their sufferings; and not because he wishes to cut them off. They may suffer much and long, as Job had done, without knowing the true reason why it was done. They may form erroneous views of the design of the divine administration, and suppose that God is severe and harsh. But if there shall come a messenger, in such circumstances, who shall explain the reason of the divine dealings, and show to the sufferer on what principles God inflicts pain; and if the sufferer shall hear the message, and acquiesce in the divine dealings, then God would be willing to be merciful. He would say that he was satisfied; the object of the affliction was accomplished, and he would restore the afflicted to health, and bestow upon him the most satisfactory evidences of his own favor. An examination of the particular words and phrases occurring in the passage, may elucidate more clearly this general idea, and lead us to its true interpretation. The word translated

messenger (מַלְאָךְ, *mālāk*), is that which is usually employed to denote an angel. It means, properly, *one who is sent*, from מָלַךְ, *to send*; and is applied (1) to one sent, or a messenger, see ch. i. 14, comp. 1 Sam. xvi. 19; (2) to a messenger sent from God, as e. g. (a) to angels, since angels were employed on messages of mercy or judgment to mankind, Ex. xxiii. 20; 2 Sam. xxiv. 16; (b) to a prophet as sent from God, Hagg. i. 13; Mal. iii. 1; (c) to a priest, Eccl. v. 6; Mal. ii. 7. It is rendered here by Jerome, *angel*, and by the LXX, *angels bringing death*. So far as the word is concerned, it may apply to any messenger sent from God—whether an angel, a prophet, or the Messiah; any one who should be commissioned to explain to man the reason why afflictions were sent, and to communicate the assurance that God was ready to pardon. ¶ *An interpreter*. That is, *an angel-interpreter*, or a messenger who should be an interpreter. The word מְלִיץ, *mēlitz*, is from מָלַץ, *lutz*, *to stammer*; to speak in a barbarous tongue; and then, in Hiphil, to cause to understand a foreign language, or to explain; to interpret. Hence it means one who explains or interprets that which was obscure; and may mean here one who explains to the sufferer the true principles of the divine administration, or who interprets the design of the divine dealings. In 2 Chron. xxxii. 31, it is rendered “ambassadors”—referring to the ambassadors that came from Babylon to Hezekiah—rendered in the margin, *interpreters*; in Isa. xliii. 27, it is rendered *teachers*, in the margin *interpreters*, referring to the religious teachers of the Jews, or those who were appointed to explain the law of God. Gesenius supposes that it means here the same as *intercessor*, or *internunciatus*, and that the phrase denotes an *interceding angel*, or one interceding with God for men. But there is no instance in which the word מְלִיץ, *mēlitz*, is so employed, and such an interpretation is not demanded by the connexion here. The idea involved in the word here is immediately explained by Elihu himself. The word



denotes one who would "show unto man his uprightness;" that is, who would be able to vindicate the righteousness of God, and explain his dealings. This word, also, may therefore be applicable to a prophet, a sage, an angel, or the Messiah—to any one who would be able to explain and interpret the divine dealings. So far as the *language* is concerned, there is no reason why it should not be applied to Elihu himself. ¶ *One among a thousand.* Such an one as you would scarcely hope to find among a thousand; that is, one who was endowed with a knowledge of the ways of God, and who was qualified for this work in a much more eminent manner than the mass of men. We have now a similar phrase to denote a man eminent for wisdom, learning, skill, or moral worth. This language is such as would most properly be applicable to a *human* messenger. One would hardly think of making such distinctions among angelic beings, or of implying that any one of them might not be qualified to bear a message to man, or that it was necessary to make such a selection as is implied by the phrase here to explain the dealings of God. ¶ *To shew unto man his uprightness.* This is the office which the *interpreting-messenger* was to perform. The "uprightness" referred to here, I suppose, is that of God, and means the rectitude of his doings; or, in a more general sense, *the justness of his character, the equity of his administration.* So explained, it would mean that the messenger would come to show that *God is worthy of confidence*; that he is not harsh, stern, severe, and cruel. The afflicted person is supposed to have no clear views on this point, but to regard God as severe and unmerciful. Elihu in this undoubtedly had Job in his eye, as entertaining views of God which were far from correct. What was necessary, he said, was, that some one would come who could show to the sufferer that God is worthy of confidence, and that his character is wholly upright. Prof. Lee interprets this as referring wholly to the Messiah, and as denoting the "righteousness which this Mediator is

empowered to give or impute to those who duly seek it; and thus, as a Mediator between God and man, to make it out as their due, by means of the ransom so found, offered, and accepted." Noyes explains it as meaning "*his duty*;" that is, "what reason and religion require of a man in his situation; repentance, submission, and prayer to God for pardon." But it seems to me more natural to refer it to the great principles of the divine government, as being worthy of confidence. Those principles it was desirable should be so explained as to inspire such confidence, and particularly this was what Elihu supposed was needed by Job. On the whole, then, it seems probable that Elihu, in this passage, by the *messenger* which he mentions, referred to some one who should perform the office which he himself purposed to perform—some man well acquainted with the principles of the divine administration; who could explain the reasons why men suffer; who could present such considerations as should lead the sufferer to true repentance; and who could assure him of the divine mercy. The *reasons* for this interpretation may be summed up in few words. They are, (1.) That this is all that is fairly and necessarily implied in the language, or such an interpretation meets the obvious import of all the expressions, and leaves nothing unexplained. (2.) It accords with what Elihu supposed to be the views of Job. He regarded him as having improper apprehensions of the government of God, and of the reasons why afflictions were sent upon him. He had patiently listened to all that he had to say; had heard him give utterance to much that seemed to be in the spirit of complaint and murmuring; and it was manifest to Elihu that he had not had right apprehensions of the design of trials, and that they had not produced the proper effect on his mind. He still needed some one—an interpreter sent from God—to *explain* all this, and to present such views as should lead him to put confidence in God as a God of mercy and equity. (3.) It accords with the character which Elihu had assumed,

24 Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from

going down to the pit: I have found <sup>1</sup> a ransom.

<sup>1</sup> or, an atonement.

and which he all along maintained. He professed to come from God, ch. xxxii. 8. He was in the place of God, ch. xxxiii. 6. He came to *explain* the whole matter which had excited so long and so warm a debate—a debate to which he had attentively listened, and where neither Job nor his friends had stated the true principles of the divine administration. To represent himself now as having a *clue* to the reason why God afflicts men in this manner, and as being qualified to *explain* the perplexing subject, was in accordance with the character which he maintained. (4.) It accords with the effect which he wished to produce on the mind of Job. He wished to bring him to confide in God; to show *him* that all these mysterious dealings were designed to bring him back to his Creator, and to restore peace and confidence to his agitated and troubled bosom. While Elihu, therefore, advances a general proposition, I doubt not that he meant to represent himself as such a messenger sent from God; and though in the whole of his speech he manifested almost the extreme of modesty, yet he regarded himself as qualified to unravel the mystery. That it refers to the Messiah cannot be demonstrated, and is improbable; for (1.) It is nowhere applied to him in the New Testament—a consideration not indeed decisive, but of some force, since it is not *very safe* to apply passages to him from the Old Testament without such authority. At least, the general rule is to be repudiated and rejected, that every passage is to be supposed to have such a reference which can be possibly made to apply to him, or where the language can be made to describe his person and offices. (2.) The work of the “interpreter,” the “angel,” or “messenger,” referred to here, is not that of the Messiah. The effect which Elihu says would be produced would be, that the life of the sufferer would be spared, his disease removed, and his flesh restored with infantile freshness. But this is

not the work which the Redeemer came to perform, and is not that which he actually does. (3.) The subject here discussed is not such as is applicable to the work of the Messiah. It is here a question solely about the *design of affliction*. That was the point to be *explained*; and *explanation* was what was needed, and what was proposed to be done. But this is not the peculiar work of the Messiah. His was a much larger, wider office; and even if this had been his whole work, how would the reference to that have met the point under discussion? I am inclined, therefore, to the opinion, that Elihu had himself particularly in his view, and that he meant to represent himself as at that time sustaining the character of a messenger sent from God to explain important principles of his administration.

24. *Then he is gracious unto him.* That is, on the supposition that he hears and regards what the messenger of God communicates. If he rightly understands the reasons of the divine administration, and acquiesces in it, and if he calls upon God in a proper manner (ver. 26), he will show him mercy, and spare him. Or it may mean, that God is, in fact, gracious to him by sending him a messenger who can come and say to him that it is the divine purpose to spare him; that he is satisfied, and will preserve him from death. If such a messenger should come, and so announce the mercy of God, then he would return to the vigor of his former days, and be fully restored to his former prosperity. Elihu refers probably to some method of communication, by which the will of God was made known to the sufferer, and by which it was told him that it was God's design not to destroy, but to discipline and save him. ¶ *Deliver him.* Heb., וַיִּפְדֵּם, *redeem him*. The word here used (פָּדָה) properly means to let loose, to cut loose; and then *to buy loose*; that is, to redeem, to ransom for a price. Sometimes it is used in the general sense of freeing or delivering, without

reference to a price, comp. Deut. vii. 8; Jer. xv. 21; Ps. xxxiv. 23; Job vi. 23; but usually there is a reference to a price, or to some valuable consideration, either expressed or implied. Comp. Notes on Isa. xliii. 3. Here the appropriate idea is expressed, for it is said, as a reason for redeeming or rescuing him, "I have found a ransom." That is, the "ransom" is the valuable consideration on account of which he was to be rescued from death. ¶ *From going down to the pit.* The grave; the world of darkness. Notes, ver. 18. That is, he would keep him alive, and restore him again to health. It is possible that by the word *pit* here, there may be a reference to a place of punishment, or to the abodes of the dead as places of gloom and horror, especially in the case of the wicked; but the more probable interpretation is, that it refers to death alone. ¶ *I have found.* That is, there is a ransom; or, I have seen a reason why he should not die. The idea is, that God was looking for some reason on account of which it would be proper to release the sufferer, and restore him to the accustomed tokens of his favor, and that such a ransom had now appeared. There was now no necessity why those sufferings should be prolonged, and he could consistently restore him to health. ¶ *A ransom.* Marg., "or, an atonement." Heb., כֹּפֶר, *kôphēr*. On the meaning of this word, see Notes on Isa. xliii. 3. The expression here means that there was something which could be regarded as a valuable consideration, or a reason why the sufferer should not be further afflicted, and why he should be preserved from going down to the grave. What that price, or valuable consideration was, is not specified; and what was the actual idea which Elihu attached to it, it is now impossible with certainty to determine. The connexion would rather lead us to suppose that it was something seen in the sufferer himself; some change wrought in his mind by his trials; some evidence of acquiescence in the government of God, and some manifestation of true repentance, which was the reason why the stroke of punishment should be removed, and

why the sufferer should be saved from death. This might be called by Elihu "a ransom"—using the word in a very large sense. There can be no doubt that such a *fact* often occurs. God lays his hand on his erring and wandering children. He brings upon them afflictions which would consign them to the grave, if they were not checked. Those afflictions are effectual in the case. They are the means of true repentance; they call back the wanderer; they lead him to put his trust in God, and to seek his happiness again in him; and this result of his trials is a reason why they should extend no farther. The object of the affliction has been accomplished, and the penitence of the sufferer is a sufficient reason for lightening the hand of affliction, and restoring him again to health and prosperity. This is not properly an *atonement*, or a *ransom*, in the sense in which the word is now technically used, but the Hebrew word here used would not be inappropriately employed to convey such an idea. Thus, in Ex. xxxii. 30, the intercession of Moses is said to be that by which an atonement would be made for the sin of the people. "Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin; and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement (אֲכַפֵּרָה, *ākāppērā*, from כָּפַר, *kāphār*) for your sin." Here, it is manifest that the act of Moses in making intercession was to be the *public reason*, or the "ransom," why they were not to be punished. So the boldness, zeal, and fidelity of Phinehas in resisting idolatry, and punishing those who had been guilty of it, are spoken of as the *atonement* or *ransom* on account of which the plague was stayed, and the anger of God removed from his people. Num. xxv. 12, 13, "Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace—because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement (וַיִּכְפֹּר, *vayikpôr*) for the children of Israel." Sept., ἐξιλάσατο. In this large sense, the sick man's repentance might be regarded as the *covering*, *ransom*, or *public reason* why he should be restored. That word literally means that which *covers*, or *overlays* anything; and then

25 His flesh shall be fresher than <sup>1</sup> a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth:

26 He shall pray unto God,

<sup>1</sup> *childhood.*

an atonement or expiation, as being such a covering. See Gen. vi. 14; Ex. xxi. 30. Cocceius, Calovius, and others suppose that the reference here is to the Messiah, and to the atonement made by him. Schultens supposes that it has the same reference by anticipation—that is, that God had *purposed* such a ransom, and that in virtue of the promised and prefigured expiation, he could now show mercy. But it cannot be demonstrated that Elihu had such a reference; and though it was undoubtedly true that God designed to show mercy to men only through that atonement, and that it was, and is, only by this that release is ever given to a sufferer, still, it does not follow that *Elihu* fully understood this. The *general* truth that God was merciful, and that the repentance of the sick man would be followed by a release from suffering, was all that can reasonably be supposed to have been understood at that period of the world. Now, we know the reason, the mode, and the extent of the ransom; and taking the words in their broadest sense, we may go to all sufferers, and say, that they may be redeemed from going down to the dark chambers of the eternal pit, for God has found a ransom. *A valuable consideration* has been offered, in the blood of the Redeemer, which is an ample reason why they should not be consigned to hell, if they are truly penitent.

25. *His flesh shall be fresher than a child's.* Marg., *childhood.* The meaning is obvious. He would be restored again to health. The calamity which had been brought upon him for purposes of discipline, would be removed. This was the theory of Elihu in regard to afflictions, and he undoubtedly meant that it should be applied to Job. If he would now, understanding the nature and design of affliction, turn to God, he would be recovered again, and enjoy the health and vigor of his youth. We

and he will be favourable unto him: and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto man his righteousness.

are not to suppose that this is universally true, though it is undoubtedly often a fact now, that if those who are afflicted become truly penitent, and call upon God, the affliction will be removed. It will have accomplished its object, and may be withdrawn. Hence, they who pray that their afflictions may be withdrawn, should *first* pray that they may accomplish on their own hearts the effect which God designs, producing in them penitence, deadness to the world, and humiliation, and *then* that his hand may be withdrawn. ¶ *He shall return to the days of his youth.* That is, to health and vigor.

26. *He shall pray unto God, &c.* That is, when he fully understands the design of affliction; and when his mind is brought to a proper state of penitence for his past conduct, then he will find God merciful and ready to show him kindness. ¶ *And he shall see his face with joy.* The face of God. That is, he shall be able to look up to him with peace and comfort. This language is similar to that which is so frequently employed in the Scriptures, in which God is said to lift upon us the light of his countenance. The meaning here is, that the afflicted man would be again permitted to look by faith on God, being reconciled to him, and would see in his face no indication of displeasure. ¶ *For he will render unto man his righteousness.* He will deal with him in justice and equity. When he sees evidence of penitence, he will treat him accordingly; and if in the afflicted man he discerns true piety, he will regard and treat him as his friend. The meaning is, that if there is in the sufferer any sincere love to God, he will not be indifferent to it, but will treat him as possessing it. This is still true, and universally true. If there is in the heart of one who is afflicted any real piety, God will not treat him as an impenitent sinner, but will manifest his mercy to him, and

27 He <sup>1</sup> looketh upon men, and *if any say*, ° I have sinned, and perverted *that which was*

<sup>1</sup> or, *He shall look upon men, and say, I have sinned.*  
o 1 Jno. 1. 9.

show to him the favors which he confers only on his friends.

27. *He looketh upon men.* Marg., "or, he shall look upon men, and say, I have sinned." Umbreit renders this, Nun singt er jubelnd zu den Menschen—"now he sings joyfully among men." So Noyes, "He shall sit among men, and say." Prof. Lee, "He shall fully consider or pronounce right to men, so that one shall say, I have sinned." Coverdale, "Such a respect hath he unto men. Therefore, let a man confess and say, I have offended." The LXX render it, *Εἰτα τότε ἀπομύψεται ἑαυτοῦ*—"then shall a man blame himself," &c. These various renderings arise from the difference of signification attached to the Hebrew word שָׁחַ. According to our interpretation, it is derived from שָׁחַ—*shir*, to sing, and then the meaning would be, "he sings before men," and thus the reference would be to the sufferer, meaning that he would have occasion to rejoice among men. See Gesenius on the word. According to the other view, the word is derived from שָׁחַ—*shûr*, to look round; to care for, or regard; and according to this, the reference is to God, meaning that he carefully and attentively observes men in such circumstances, and, if he sees evidence that there is true penitence, he has compassion and saves. This idea certainly accords better with the scope of the passage than the former, and it seems to me is to be regarded as correct. ¶ *And if any say, I have sinned.* Heb., "And says;" that is, if the sufferer, under the pressure of his afflictions, is willing to confess his faults, then God is ready to show him mercy. This accords with what Elihu purposed to state of the design of afflictions, that they were intended to bring men to reflection, and to be a means of wholesome discipline. There is no doubt

right, and it profited me not;

28 He <sup>1</sup> will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.

<sup>1</sup> or, *He hath delivered my soul, &c., and my life.*

that he meant that all this should be understood by Job as applicable to himself, for he manifestly means to be understood as saying that he had not seen in him the evidence of a penitent mind, such as he supposed afflictions were designed to produce. ¶ *And perverted that which was right.* That is, in regard to operations and views of the divine government. He had held error, or had cherished wrong apprehensions of the divine character. Or it may mean, that he had dealt unjustly with men in his intercourse with them. ¶ *And it profited me not.* The word here used (נָפַץ—*shāvā*) means properly to be even or level; then to be equal, or of like value; and here may mean, that he now saw that it was no advantage to him to have done wickedly, since it brought upon him such a punishment, or the benefit which he received from his life of wickedness was no equivalent for the pain which he had been called to suffer in consequence of it. This is the common interpretation. Rosenmüller, however, suggests another, which is, that he designs by this language to express his sense of the divine mercy, and that it means "my afflictions are in no sense equal to my deserts. I have not been punished as I might justly have been, for God has interposed to spare me." It seems to me, however, that the former interpretation accords best with the meaning of the words and the scope of the passage. It would then be the reflection of a man on the bed of suffering, that the course of life which brought him there had been attended with no advantage, but had been the means of plunging him into deserved sorrows, from which he could be rescued only by the grace of God.

28. *He will deliver his soul.* Marg., "He hath delivered my soul." There are various readings here in the text, which give rise to this diversity of interpreta-

29 Lo, all these *things* worketh  
 1 God oftentimes with man,

30 To bring back his soul  
 from the pit, <sup>p</sup> to be enlightened  
 with the light <sup>q</sup> of the living.

<sup>1</sup> twice and thrice. p Ps. 40. 1, 2. Is. 38. 17.  
<sup>q</sup> Ps. 56. 13. Acts 26. 18.

tion. The present reading in the text is נַפְשִׁי—*my soul*; and according to this, it is to be regarded as the language of the sufferer celebrating the mercy of God, and is language which is connected with the confession in the previous verse, "I have sinned; I found it no advantage; and he hath rescued me from death." Many MSS., however, read נַפְשִׁי—*his soul*; and according to this, the language would be that of Elihu, saying, that in those circumstances God would deliver him when he made suitable confession of his sin. The sense is essentially the same. The Vulgate has, "He will deliver *his* soul;" the LXX, "Save *my* soul." ¶ *From going into the pit.* Notes, ver. 18. ¶ *And his life shall see the light.* Here there is the same variety of reading which occurs in regard to the word *soul*. The present Hebrew text is (נַפְשִׁי)—"*my* life;" many MSS. read (נַפְשִׁי) "*his* life." The phrase, "to see the light," is equivalent to *live*. Death was represented as going down into regions where there was no ray of light. See ch. iii. 20, x. 21, 22.

29. *Lo, all these things worketh God.* That is, he takes all these methods to warn men, and to reclaim them from their evil ways. ¶ *Oftentimes.* Heb., as in the margin, *twice, thrice*. This may be taken either, as it is by our translators, to denote an indefinite number, meaning that God takes *frequent* occasion to warn men, and *repeats* the admonition when they disregard it, or more probably Elihu refers here to the particular methods which he had specified, and which were three in number. First, warnings in the visions of the night, vs. 14—17. Second, afflictions, 19—22. Third, the messenger which God sent to make the sufferer acquainted with

31 Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I will speak.

32 If thou hast any thing to say, answer me: speak, for I desire to justify thee.

the design of the affliction, and to assure him that he might return to God, vs. 23—26. So the LXX understand it, who render it, ὁδοὺς τρεῖς—*three ways*, referring to the three methods which Elihu had specified.

30. *To bring back his soul from the pit.* To keep him from descending to the grave, and to the dark world beneath. He takes these methods of warning men, in order that they may not bring destruction on themselves. See ver. 18. ¶ *To be enlightened with the light of the living.* That he may still enjoy life, and not descend to the world of shades.

31. *Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me, &c.* Elihu designs to intimate that he had much more to say which demanded close attention. He begged, therefore, that Job would hear him patiently through.

32. *If thou hast any thing to say, answer me.* In the previous verse, Elihu had asked that Job would hear all that he had to say. Yet here, in view of what he had said, he asks of him that if there were anything from which he dissented, he would now express his dissent. We may suppose that he paused at this part of his speech, and as what he had said related particularly to Job, he felt that it was proper that he should have an opportunity to reply. ¶ *For I desire to justify thee.* I would do you justice. I would not pervert what you have said, or attribute to you any wrong opinions or any improper motives. Perhaps there may be included also a wish to vindicate him, if he possibly could. He did not desire to dispute for the sake of disputing, or to blame him if he could avoid it, but his aim was the truth; and if he could, he wished to vindicate the character of Job from the aspersions which had been cast upon it.

33 If not, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom.

33, *If not, hearken unto me, &c.* If nothing has been said from which you dissent, then listen to me, and I will explain further the perplexing subject which has excited so much discussion.

These remarks of Elihu imply great confidence in the truth of what he had to say, but they are not arrogant and disrespectful. He treats Job with the utmost deference; is willing to hear all that could be said in opposition to his own views, and is desirous of not wound-

ing his feelings, or doing injustice to his cause. It may be supposed that he paused here, to give Job an opportunity to reply, but as he made no remarks, he resumed his discourse in the following chapter. The views which he had expressed were evidently new to Job, and were entirely at variance with those of his three friends, and they appear to have been received by all with profound and respectful silence.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

ELIHU appears to have paused, to give Job an opportunity to reply to what he had said. When he found that he had nothing to reply, he addresses particularly the friends of Job, designing to vindicate the ways of God, and to examine some of the positions which Job had advanced. He had been grieved and offended that they had not replied to what he considered to be his erroneous sentiments (ch. xxxii. 3), and now he proposes to reply to those sentiments himself, and to show what was the truth in the matter. The chapter contains the following points:—

I. The introduction to the speech, in which Elihu addresses himself particularly to the friends of Job, and asks their careful consideration of the whole subject, vs. 1—4.

II. A statement of the sentiments of Job which he considered erroneous, and which he proposed to examine, vs. 5—9. Particularly, Job had said that he was righteous; that God had not dealt with him as he ought to have done; and that there was no advantage in serving God and being pious, since calamities came upon the righteous as well as the wicked, and the wicked under his government fared as well as the righteous.

III. An examination and a refutation of these opinions, vs. 10—30. In doing this, Elihu refers to the following considerations. (a) A declaration that God will not do wickedness, and that he cannot pervert judgment. This Elihu seems to consider as indisputable, vs. 10—12. (b) God is the absolute and original sovereign of all the earth. No one has *given* him authority to reign, and no one can control him, vs. 13—16. (c) There is, therefore, great impropriety in calling in question the dealings of such a sovereign. It would be improper even to arraign an earthly prince, and to accuse him of injustice; and how much more impropriety is there in calling in question the equity of the Great Governor of the universe! vs. 17—19. (d) All men are under the notice of God. The wicked cannot escape, and there is no land of darkness where they can be concealed. It cannot be supposed, therefore, that they will escape because God *cannot* ferret them out, and call them to judgment, vs. 20—22. (e) God will not lay upon man more than is right, or give him occasion to enter into controversy with him, ver. 23. (f) God *in fact* cuts off the wicked. He destroys them in the night; he strikes them suddenly down, and spares the poor and the oppressed who cry unto him. He takes care that the hypocrite shall not reign, and brings upon him deserved punishment, vs. 24—30. By such considerations Elihu meets the allegations of Job, and endeavours to vindicate the government of God. They are for the most part mere assertions, and in his view the whole subject resolves itself into a matter of sovereignty. The amount of all that he says is, that man should *submit* to God, and that it is *presumption* in him to attempt to call in question the equity of his government.

IV. Elihu now turns again to Job, and appeals to him. He says that the proper course for him, instead of complaining of God, would be to confess that he had done wrong, and to pray that he might be taught to understand that which was now inscrutable to him. He ought not to expect that everything would be according to his mind. He ought to seek counsel of men of understanding, and listen with deference to their opinions, and not to arrogate all wisdom to himself. Job had erred, in the opinion of Elihu, and had maintained sentiments which tended to vindicate the conduct of wicked men. He had evinced a spirit of rebellion, and multiplied

words against God, vs. 31—37. The drift of the whole discourse, therefore, is, to convince Job that he was wrong, and to exhort him to acquiesce in the righteous government of God; to lead him to inquire into the reasons why God had afflicted him, and confess the sins which had been the occasion of his trials.

**F**URTHERMORE Elihu answered and said,

2 Hear my words, O ye wise men; and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge.

3 For the ear trieth words, as the <sup>1</sup> mouth tasteth meat.

4 Let us choose to us judg-

<sup>1</sup> palate.

1. *Furthermore Elihu answered and said.* That is, evidently, after a pause, to see if Job had anything to reply. The word *answered* in the Scriptures often means "to begin a discourse," though nothing had been said by others. See ch. iii. 2; Isa. xiv. 10; Zech. i. 10, iii. 4, iv. 11, 12. Sometimes it is used with reference to a *subject*, meaning that one replied to what could be suggested on the opposite side. Here it may be understood either in the general sense of beginning a discourse, or more probably as replying to the sentiments which Job had advanced in the debate with his friends.

2. *Hear my words, O ye wise men.* Addressing particularly the three friends of Job. The previous chapter had been addressed to Job himself. He had stated to him his views of the design of affliction, and he had nothing to reply. He now addresses himself to his friends, with a particular view of examining some of the sentiments which Job had advanced, and of showing where he was in error. He addresses them as "wise men," or *sages*, and as endowed with "knowledge," to conciliate their attention, and because he regarded them as qualified to understand the difficult subject which he proposed to explain.

3. *For the ear trieth words.* Ascertains their meaning, and especially determines what words are worth regarding. The object of this is, to fix the attention on what he was about to say; to get the *ear*, so that every word should make its proper impression. The word *ear* in this place, however, seems not to

ment: let us know among ourselves what is good.

5 For Job hath said, <sup>a</sup> I am righteous: and God hath taken away my judgment.

6 Should I lie against my right? my wound <sup>2</sup> is incurable without transgression.

a c. 27. 2.

<sup>2</sup> arrow, c. 6. 4.

be used to denote the external organ, but the whole faculty of hearing. It is by *hearing* that the meaning of what is said is determined, as it is by the *taste* that the quality of food is discerned. ¶ *As the mouth tasteth meat.* Marg., as in Heb., *palate*. The meaning is, as the organ of taste determines the nature of the various articles of food. The same figure is used by Job in ch. xii. 11.

4. *Let us choose to us judgment.* That is, let us examine and explore what is true and right. Amidst the conflicting opinions, and the sentiments which have been advanced, let us find out what will abide the test of close investigation.

5. *For Job hath said, I am righteous.* See ch. xiii. 18, "I know that I shall be justified." Comp. ch. xxiii. 10, 11, where he says, if he was tried, he would come forth as gold. Elihu may have also referred to the general course of remark which he had pursued as vindicating himself. ¶ *And God hath taken away my judgment.* This sentiment is found in ch. xxvii. 2. See Notes on that place.

6. *Should I lie against my right?* These are also quoted as the words of Job, and as a part of the erroneous opinions on which Elihu proposes to comment. These words do not occur, however, as used by Job respecting himself, and Elihu must be understood to refer to what he regarded as the general strain of the argument maintained by him. In regard to the meaning of the words, there have been various opinions. Jerome renders them, "For in judging me there is falsehood—*mendacium est*;



7 What man is like Job, *who* drinketh up scorning like water;

8 Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and

walketh with wicked men?

9 For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing<sup>b</sup> that he should delight himself with God.

<sup>b</sup> c. 9. 22, 23.

my violent arrow [the painful arrow in me] is without any sin." The LXX, "He [the Lord] hath been false in my accusation"—ἐψεύσατο δὲ τῷ κριματι μου—"my arrow is heavy without transgression." Coverdale, "I must needs be a liar, though my cause be right." Umbreit renders it, "I must lie if I should acknowledge myself to be guilty." Noyes, "Though I am innocent, I am made a liar." Prof. Lee, "Should I lie respecting my case? mine arrow is mortal without transgression." That is, Job said he could not lie about it; he could use no language that would deceive. He felt that a mortal arrow had reached him without transgression, or without any adequate cause. Rosenmüller renders it, "However just may be my cause, I appear to be a liar." That is, he was regarded as guilty, and treated accordingly, however conscious he might be of innocence, and however strenuously he might maintain that he was not guilty. The meaning probably is, "I am held to be a liar. I defend myself; go over my past life; state my course of conduct; meet the accusations of my friends, but in all this I am still held to be a liar. My friends so regard me—for they will not credit my statements, and they go on still to argue as if I was the most guilty of mortals. And God also in this holds me to be a liar, for he treats me constantly as if I were guilty. He hears not my vindication, and he inflicts pain and woe upon me, as if all that I had said about my own integrity were false, and I were one of the most abandoned of mortals, so that on all hands I am regarded and treated as if I were basely false." The literal translation of the Hebrew is, "Concerning my judgment [or my cause] I am held to be a liar." ¶ *My wound is incurable.* Marg., as in Heb., *arrow.* The idea is, that a deadly arrow had smitten him, which could not be extracted. So in Virgil,

"Hæret lateri letalis arundo." Æn. iv. 73.

The image is taken from an animal that had been pierced with a deadly arrow. ¶ *Without transgression.* Without any sin that deserved such treatment. Job did not claim to be absolutely perfect; he maintained only that the sufferings which he endured were no proper proof of his character. Comp. ch. vi. 4.

7. *What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water.* A similar image occurs in ch. xv. 16. The idea is, that he was full of reproachful speeches respecting God; of the language of irreverence and rebellion. He indulged in it as freely as a man drinks water; gathers up and imbibes all the language of reproach that he can find, and indulges in it as if it were perfectly harmless.

8. *Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity.* That is, in his sentiments. The idea is, that he advocated the same opinions which they did, and entertained the same views of God and of his government. The same charge had been before brought against him by his friends. See Notes on ch. xxi.

9. *For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God.* That is, there is no advantage in piety, and in endeavoring to serve God. It will make no difference in the divine dealings with him. He will be treated just as well if he lives a life of sin, as if he undertakes to live after the severest rules of piety. Job had not used precisely this language, but in ch. ix. 22, he had expressed nearly the same sentiment. It is probable, however, that Elihu refers to what he regarded as the general scope and tendency of his remarks, as implying that there was no respect paid to character in the divine dealings with mankind. It was easy to pervert the views which Job actually entertained, so as to make him appear to maintain this sentiment, and it was probably with a special view to this charge that Job uttered the sen-

10 Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of <sup>1</sup> understanding: Far be it from God, *that he should do wickedness*; and *from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity.*

*Heart.*

timents recorded in ch. xxi. See Notes on that chapter.

10. *Therefore hearken unto me.* Elihu proceeds now to reply to what he regarded as the erroneous sentiments of Job, and to show the impropriety of language which reflected so much on God and his government. Instead, however, of meeting the *facts* in the case, and showing how the actual course of events could be reconciled with justice, he resolves it all into a matter of sovereignty, and maintains that it is wrong to doubt the rectitude of the dealings of one so mighty as God. In this he pursues the same course substantially which the friends of Job had done, and does little more to solve the real difficulties in the case than they had. The *facts* to which Job had referred are scarcely adverted to; the perplexing questions are still unsolved, and the amount of all that Elihu says is, that God is a sovereign, and that there must be an improper spirit when men presume to pronounce on his dealings. ¶ *Ye men of understanding.* Marg., as in Heb., *men of "heart."* The word *heart* is here used as it was uniformly among the Hebrews; the Jewish view of physiology being that the *heart* was the seat of all the mental operations. They never speak of the head as the seat of the intellect, as we do. The meaning here is, that Elihu regarded them as *sages*, qualified to comprehend and appreciate the truth on the subject under discussion. ¶ *Far be it from God.* Heb., *חַוֵּל*—“profane, unholy.” It is an expression of *abhorrence*, as if the thing proposed were profane or unholy. 1 Sam. xx. 2; Gen. xviii. 25; Josh. xxiv. 16. The meaning here is, that the very idea that God would do wrong, or could patronize iniquity, was a pro-

11 For the work <sup>c</sup> of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to *his ways.*

12 Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.

c Re. 22. 12.

fane conception, and was not to be tolerated for a moment. This is true enough, and in this general sentiment, no doubt, Job would himself have concurred.

11. *For the work of a man shall he render unto him.* He shall treat each man as he deserves—and this is the essence of justice. Of the truth of this, also, there could have been no question. Elihu does not, indeed, apply it to the case of Job, but there can be little doubt that he intended that it should have such a reference. He regarded Job as having accused God of injustice, for having inflicted woes on him which he by no means deserved. He takes care, therefore, to state this general principle, that with God there *must* be impartial justice—leaving the application of this principle to the *facts* in the world, to be arranged as well as possible. No one can doubt that Elihu in this took the true ground, and that the great principle is to be held that God *can do no wrong*, and that all the *facts* in the universe *must* be consistent with this great principle, whether we can now see it to be so or not.

12. *Yea, surely God will not do wickedly.* So important does Elihu hold this principle to be, that he repeats it, and dwells upon it. He says, “it *surely* (כִּדְבָר) *must* be so.” The principle *must* be held at all hazards, and no opinion which contravenes this should be indulged for one moment. His ground of complaint against Job was, that he had not held fast to this principle, but, under the pressure of his sufferings, had indulged in remarks which implied that God *might* do wrong. ¶ *Neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.* As Elihu supposed Job to have maintained. See ver. 5. To

13 Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath disposed <sup>1</sup> the whole world?

<sup>1</sup> all of it.

"pervert judgment" is to do injustice; to place injustice in the place of right.

13. *Who hath given him a charge over the earth?* That is, he is the great original Proprietor and Ruler of all. He has derived his authority to govern from no one; he is under subjection to no one, and he has, therefore, an absolute right to do his own pleasure. Reigning, then, with absolute and original authority, no one has a right to call in question the equity of what he does. The argument of Elihu here, that God would do right, is derived solely from his *independence*. If he were a subordinate governor, he would feel less interest in the correct administration of affairs, and might be tempted to commit injuries to gratify the feelings of his superior. As he is, however, supreme and independent, he cannot be tempted to do wrong by any reference to a superior will; as the universe is that which he has made, and which belongs to him, every consideration would lead him to do right to all. He can have no partiality for one more than another; and there can be no one to whom he would desire to do injustice—for who wishes to injure that which belongs to himself? Prof. Lee, however, renders this, "Who hath set a land in order against him?" He supposes that the remark is designed to show the folly of rebelling against God. But the former interpretation seems better to accord with the scope of the argument. ¶ *Or who hath disposed the whole world?* Who has arranged the affairs of the universe? The word rendered "world," usually means *the habitable earth*, but it is employed here in the sense of the universe, and the idea is, that God has arranged and ordered all things, and that he is the supreme and absolute Sovereign.

14. *If he set his heart upon man.* Marg., as in Heb., "upon him"—mean-

14 If he set his heart upon <sup>2</sup> man, if he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath;

<sup>2</sup> him.

ing man. That is, if he fixes his attention particularly on him, or should form a purpose in regard to him. The argument seems to be this: "If God wished such a thing, and should set his heart upon it, he could easily cut off the whole race. He has power to do it, and no one can deny him the right. Man has no *claim* to life, but he who gave it has a right to withdraw it, and the race is absolutely dependent on this infinite Sovereign. Being such a Sovereign, therefore, and having such a right, man cannot complain of his Maker as unjust, if he is called to pass through trials." Rosenmüller, however, supposes this is to be taken in the sense of severe scrutiny, and that it means, "If God should examine with strictness the life of man, and mark all his faults, no flesh would be allowed to live. All would be found to be guilty, and would be cut off." Grotius supposes it to mean, "If God should regard only himself; if he wished only to be good to himself—that is, to consult his own welfare, he would take away life from all, and live and reign alone." This is also the interpretation of Umbreit, Schnurrer, and Eichhorn. Noyes regards it as an argument drawn from the benevolence of God, meaning, if God were severe, unjust, and revengeful, the earth would be a scene of universal desolation. It seems to me, however, that it is rather an argument from the absolute sovereignty or power of the Almighty, implying that man had no right to complain of the divine dealings in the loss of health, property, or friends; for if he chose he might sweep away the whole race, and leave the earth desolate. ¶ *If he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath.* The spirit of man is represented as having been originally given by God, and as returning to him when man dies. Eccl. xii. 7, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

15 All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust.

16 If now *thou hast* understanding, hear this: hearken to the voice of my words:

17 Shall <sup>d</sup> even he that hateth right <sup>1</sup> govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just?

d 2 Sa. 23. 3.

<sup>1</sup> bind.

15. *All flesh shall perish together.* If God chose, he would have a right to cut down the whole race. How then shall men complain of the loss of health, comforts, and friends, and presume to arraign God as if he were unjust?

16. *If now thou hast understanding, hear this.* This appears to be addressed to Job. The discourse before this had been directed to his three friends, but Elihu appears here to have turned to Job, and to have made a solemn appeal to him, whether this were not so. In the subsequent verses he remonstrates with him about his views, and shows him that what he had said implied severe reflections on the character and government of God.

17. *Shall even he that hateth right govern?* Marg., as in Heb., *bind*. That is, shall he bind by laws. The argument in this verse seems to be an appeal to what *must* be the conviction of mankind, that God, the Great Governor of the universe, could not be unjust. This conviction, Elihu appears to have supposed, was so deep in the human mind, that he might appeal even to Job himself for its truth. The question here asked implies that it would be impossible to believe that one who was unjust could govern the universe. Such a supposition would be at variance with all the convictions of the human soul, and all the indications of the nature of his government to be found in his works. ¶ *And wilt thou condemn him that is most just?* The great and holy Ruler of the universe. The argument here is, that Job had in fact placed himself in the attitude of condemning him who, from the fact that he was the

18 *Is it fit* to say to a king, *Thou art wicked?* and to princes, *Ye are ungodly?*

19 *How much less* to him <sup>f</sup> that accepteth <sup>g</sup> not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they all are the work of his hands.

c Ex. 22. 28.

f He. 12. 28.

g 1 Pe. 1. 17.

Ruler of the universe, must be most just. The impropriety of this he shows in the following verses.

18. *Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked?* The argument here is this: "There would be gross impropriety in arraigning the conduct of an earthly monarch, and using language severely condemning what he does. Respect is due to those of elevated rank. Their plans are often concealed. It is difficult to judge of them until they are fully developed. To condemn those plans, and to use the language of complaint, would not be tolerated, and would be grossly improper. How much more so when that language relates to the Great, the Infinite God, and to his eternal plans!" It may be added here, in accordance with the sentiment of Elihu, that men often indulge in thoughts and language about God which they would not tolerate respecting an earthly monarch.

19. *How much less to him that accepteth not the person of princes.* To accept the person of any one, is to treat him with special favor on account of his rank, his wealth, or from favoritism and partiality. This God often disclaims in respect to himself, (comp. Gal. ii. 6; Acts x. 34; 2 Chron. xix. 7; Rom. ii. 11; Eph. vi. 9; Col. iii. 25;) and solemnly forbids it in others. See James ii. 1, 3, 9; Lev. xix. 15; Deut. i. 17, xvi. 19. The meaning here is, that God is entirely impartial in his administration, and treats all as they ought to be treated. He shows favor to no one on account of wealth, rank, talent, office, or gay apparel, and he excludes no one from favor on account

20 In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away: and <sup>1</sup> the mighty shall be taken away

<sup>1</sup> they shall take away the mighty.

of poverty, ignorance, or a humble rank in life. This it seems was an admitted sentiment in the time of Elihu, and on the ground of the fact that it was indisputable, he strongly argues the impropriety of calling in question the equity of his administration in language such as that which Job had used. ¶ *For they all are the work of his hands.* He regards them all as his creatures. No one has any special claim on him on account of rank, talent, or wealth. Every creature that he has made, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, may expect that impartial justice will be done him, and that his external circumstances will not control or modify the divine determinations in regard to him, or the divine dealings towards him.

20. *In a moment shall they die.* That is, the rich and the great. They pass suddenly off the stage of action. They have no power to compel God to favor them, and they have no permanency of existence here which can constitute a claim on his special favor. Soon they will lie undistinguished in the dust. All are in his hand; and when he wills it, they must lie down in the dust together. He exempts none from death; spares none on account of beauty, rank, wealth, talent, or learning, but consigns all indiscriminately to the grave—showing that he is disposed to treat them all alike. This is urged by Elihu as a proof that God has no partiality, but treats all men as being on the same level—and there is no more striking illustration of this than is furnished by death. All die. None are spared on account of title, wealth, rank, beauty, age, or wisdom. All die in a manner that shows that he has no favoritism. The rich man may die with a malady as painful and protracted as the poor man; the beautiful and accomplished with a disease as foul and loathsome as

without hand.

21 For his eyes <sup>h</sup> are upon the ways of man, and he seeth <sup>i</sup> all his goings.

<sup>h</sup> 2 Ch. 16. 9.

<sup>i</sup> Ps. 139. 2, 3.

the beggar. The sad change that the body undergoes in the tomb is as repulsive in the one case as in the other; and amidst all the splendor of rank, and the magnificence of dress and equipage, God intends to keep the great truth before the minds of men, that they are really on a level, and that all must share at his hand alike. ¶ *And the people shall be troubled.* They shall be shaken, agitated, alarmed. They dread impending danger, or the prospect of sudden destruction. ¶ *At midnight.* The image here is probably taken from an earthquake, or from a sudden onset made by a band of robbers on a village at night. The essential thought is that of the suddenness with which God can take away the mighty and the mean together. Nothing can resist him, and as he has this absolute control over men, and deals with all alike, there is great impropriety in complaining of his government. ¶ *And the mighty.* Marg., *They shall take away the mighty.* The idea is, that the great shall be removed—to wit, by sudden death or by overwhelming calamity. The argument of Elihu in this passage (vs. 18–20) is, that it would be esteemed great presumption to arraign the conduct of a prince or king, and it must be much more so to call in question the doings of him who is so superior to princes and kings that he shows them no partiality on account of their rank, but sweeps them away by sudden calamity as he does the most humble of mankind. ¶ *Without hand.* That is, without any human instrumentality, or without the use of any visible means. It is by a word—by an expression of his will—by power where the agency is not seen. The design is, to show that God can do it with infinite ease.

21. *For his eyes are upon the ways of man.* None can escape from his notice. Comp. Ps. cxxxix. 2, 3.

22 *There is no darkness*; <sup>k</sup> nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide <sup>l</sup> themselves.

23 For he will not lay upon man more *than* <sup>m</sup> right; that he

<sup>k</sup> Am. 9. 2, 3. He. 4. 13. <sup>l</sup> Re. 6. 15, 16.  
<sup>m</sup> Is. 42. 3. <sup>1</sup> Cor. 10. 13.

22. There is *no darkness*. No dark cavern which can furnish a place of concealment. The guilty usually take refuge in some obscure place where men cannot detect them. But Elihu says that man has no power of concealing himself thus from God. ¶ *Nor shadow of death*. A phrase here signifying deep darkness. See it explained in the Notes on ch. iii. 5. ¶ *Where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves*. That is, where they may conceal themselves so as not to be detected by God. They may conceal themselves from the notice of man; they may escape the most vigilant police; they may elude all the officers of justice on earth; but they cannot be hid from God. There is an eye that sees their lurking places, and there is a hand that will drag them forth to justice.

23. *For he will not lay upon man more than right*. Very various translations have been given of this verse. According to our common version, it means that God will not deal with man in such a manner as to give him just reason for calling in question the rectitude of the divine dealings. He shall in no case receive more than his sins deserve, so as to give him cause for complaint. This is undoubtedly a correct sentiment; but it may be doubted whether it is the sense conveyed by the original. Umbreit renders it:

"Denn er braucht auf einem Mann nicht lang zu achten.  
Um ihn vor Gott in das Gericht zu ziehen."

"For he needs not long to regard a man in order to bring him before God in judgment,"—meaning that he has all power; that he can at once see all his character; and that he can bring him at once to his bar. This translation un-

should <sup>1</sup> enter into judgment with God.

24 He shall break in pieces mighty men without <sup>2</sup> number, and set others in their stead.

<sup>1</sup> go.

<sup>2</sup> searching out.

doubtedly accords with the general scope of the argument. Noyes renders it:

"He needeth not attend long to a man,  
To bring him into judgment before God."

Wemyss renders it in a similar way:

"He has no need of laborious inquiry,  
In order to convict men at his tribunal."

Rosenmüller gives a similar sense to the passage. According to this, the meaning is, that there is no need that God should give long attention to a man, or go into a protracted investigation, in order that he may bring him to judgment. He knows him at a glance. He can at once convict him, and can decide the case in a moment without danger of error. Human tribunals are under a necessity of long and patient investigation, and then are often deceived; but no such necessity, and no such danger, pertains to God. This interpretation agrees with the scope of the passage (comp. Notes on ver. 24), and seems to me to be correct. The Hebrew literally is, "For not upon man will he place [scil., his mind or attention] long that he should go before God in judgment." That is, there is no need of long and anxious investigation on his part, in order that he may prove that it is right for him to cut man off. He may do it at once, and no one has a right to complain.

24. *He shall break in pieces*. He crushes or destroys the great. He is not intimidated by their wealth, their rank, or their number. ¶ *Without number*. Marg., more correctly, *searching out*. That is, he does it without the protracted process of a judicial investigation. The Hebrew word here used (חָקַר) means, properly, *a searching out, an examination*; and the meaning here is, that there is no need of his going into a

25 Therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth *them* in the night, so that they are <sup>1</sup> destroyed.

26 He striketh them as wicked men in the open <sup>2</sup> sight <sup>n</sup> of others;

<sup>1</sup> crushed.

<sup>2</sup> place of beholders.

n 1 Ti. 5. 24.

protracted investigation into the lives of wicked men before he brings them to punishment. He sees them at once; knows all their conduct, and may proceed against them without delay. Hence it is that he comes often in such a sudden manner, and cuts them off. A human tribunal is under a necessity of examining witnesses and of attending to all the palliating circumstances, before it can pronounce a sentence on an offender. But it is not so with God. He judges at once and directly, and comes forth, therefore, in a sudden manner to cut down the guilty. ¶ *And set others in their stead.* Place others in the situation which they now occupy. That is, he can with the utmost ease make entire revolutions among men.

25. *Therefore he knoweth their works.* Or, "Because he knoweth their works." The word (נִסָּה) here rendered "therefore," is evidently used as denoting that *since* or *because* he was intimately acquainted with all which they did, he could justly bring vengeance upon them without long investigation. ¶ *And he overturneth them in the night.* Literally, "he turneth night;" meaning, probably, he turns night upon them; that is, he brings calamity upon them. The word *night* is often used to denote calamity, or ruin. Umbreit understands it in the sense of *turning about the night*; that is, that they had covered up their deeds as in the night, but God *so turns the night about* as to bring them to the light of day. The Vulgate renders it, *et idcirco inducit noctem*, "and therefore he brings night;" that is, he brings adversity and ruin. This is, probably, the correct interpretation. ¶ *So that they are destroyed.* Marg., *crushed*. The idea is, that when God thus brings adversity

27 Because they turned back <sup>3</sup> from him, and <sup>o</sup> would not consider any of his ways:

28 So that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him, and he heareth <sup>p</sup> the cry of the afflicted.

<sup>3</sup> from after.

o Pr. 1. 29, 30.

p Ex. 22. 27.

upon them, they are prostrated beneath his power.

26. *He striketh them as wicked men.* Literally, "Under the wicked, or on account of the wicked, he smites them." That is, he deals with them *as if* they were wicked; he regards and treats them as such. He deals with them *under* the general character of wicked men, and punishes them accordingly. ¶ *In the open sight of others.* Marg., as in Heb., *in the place of beholders*. The idea is, that it is done openly or publicly. Their sins had been committed in secret, but they are punished openly. The manifestation of the divine displeasure is in the presence of spectators, or is so open and public, that it cannot but be seen. It is very probable that in all this description, Elihu had his eye upon the public calamities which had come upon Job, and that he meant to include him among the number of mighty men whom God thus suddenly overturned.

27. *Because they turned back from him.* Marg., *from after him*. That is, they receded, or went away from God. ¶ *And would not consider any of his ways.* They would not regard or attend to any of his commands. The word *way*, in the Scriptures, is often used to denote *religion*. A *way* denotes the course of life which one leads; the path in which he walks. The "ways of God" denote his course or plan, his precepts or laws; and to depart from them, or to disregard them, is only another mode of saying that a man has no religion.

28. *So that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him.* Their character is that of oppressors. They take away the rights of the poor; strip away their property without any just claims, and cause them to pour out their lamenta-

29 When he <sup>g</sup> giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth <sup>r</sup> his face, who then can behold him? whether *it be*

g Ro. 8. 31—34.

r Ps. 143. 7.

tions before God. ¶ *And he heareth the cry of the afflicted.* They oppress the poor so that they appeal unto him, but God hears their cry, and brings punishment upon the oppressor. This is a general remark thrown in here, meaning that God *always* regards the cry of the oppressed. Its bearing on the case before us is, that God hears the appeal which the oppressed make to him, and as a consequence brings calamity upon those who are guilty of wrong.

29. *When he giveth quietness.* That is, when God designs to give rest, comfort, ease, or prosperity in any way to a man. The Hebrew word here used may refer to any kind of ease, rest, or peace. The idea which Elihu intends to convey is, that God has all things under his control, and that he can bring prosperity or adversity upon an individual or a nation at his own pleasure. ¶ *Who then can make trouble?* Literally, “Who can condemn, or hold guilty”—פָּחַד. The sense is, that no one can overwhelm him with the consciousness of guilt, to whom God intends to give the peace resulting from his favor and friendship. Or, no one can bring calamities upon a man *as if* he were guilty, or so as to *show* that he is guilty, when God intends to treat him as if he were not. This is as true now as it was in the time of Elihu. When God designs to give peace to a man’s soul, and to impart to him the evidence that his sins are forgiven, there is no one who can excite in his mind the conviction of guilt, or take away the comfort that God gives. When he designs to *treat* a man as if he were his friend, and to impart to him such evidences of his favor as shall convince the world that he is his friend, there is no one who can prevent it. No one can so calumniate him, or so prejudice the world against him, or so arrest the

*done* against a nation, or against a man only:

30 That the hypocrite reign not, lest the people <sup>s</sup> be ensnared.

s 1 Ki. 12. 28.

descending tokens of the divine favor, as to turn back the proof of the favor of God. Comp. Prov. xvi. 7. ¶ *And when he hideth his face.* To *hide the face*, is a common expression in the Scriptures to denote calamity, distress, and the want of spiritual comfort, as the expression “to lift up the light of the countenance” is a common phrase to denote the opposite. Comp. ch. xiii. 24. ¶ *Who then can behold him?* An expression denoting that no one can then have cheering and elevating views of God. No one can then have those clear conceptions of his character and government which will give peace to the soul. This is also as true now as it was in the time of Elihu. We are dependent on God himself for any just views of his own character, for any elevating and purifying conceptions of his government and plans, and for any consolation flowing in upon our souls from the evidence that he is our friend. ¶ *Whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only.* The same truth pertains to nations and to individuals. The same laws respecting the resources of peace and happiness apply to both. Both are alike dependent on God, and neither can secure permanent peace and prosperity without him. Both are alike at his sovereign disposal; and neither can originate permanent sources of prosperity. This, too, is as true now as it was in the time of Elihu. Nations are more prone to forget it than individuals are, but still it is a great truth which should never be forgotten, that neither have power to originate or perpetuate the means of happiness, but that both are alike dependent on God.

30. *That the hypocrite reign not.* All this is done to prevent wicked men from ruling over the people. The remarks of Elihu had had respect much to princes and kings, and he had shown that however great they were, they



31 Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I <sup>t</sup> have borne *chas-*

*t* Da. 9. 7—14.

were in the hands of God, and were wholly at his disposal. He *now* says that the design of his dealings with them was to prevent their oppressing their fellow-men. The general scope of the remarks of Elihu is, that God is the universal Sovereign, that he has all men under his control, and that there are none so powerful as to be able to resist his will. The remark in this verse is thrown in, not as illustrating this general sentiment, but to show what was *in fact* the aim for which he thus interposed—to save men from being oppressed and crushed by those in authority. ¶ *Lest the people be ensnared.* Heb., “From their being snarers of the people.” He thrusts down the mighty, in order that they may not be left to take the people as wild beasts are taken in the toils. They were disposed to make use of their power to oppress others, but God interposes, and the people are saved. For a fuller view of this verse, see the remarks of Rosenmüller.

31. *Surely it is meet to be said unto God.* It is evident that this verse commences a new strain of remark, and that it is designed particularly to bring Job to proper reflections in view of what had occurred. There has been, however, much diversity of opinion about the meaning of this and the following verses. Schultens enumerates no less than *fifteen* different interpretations which have been given of this verse. The *general* meaning seems to be, that a man who is afflicted ought to submit to God, and not to murmur or complain. He ought to suppose that there is some good reason for what God does, and to be resigned to his will, even where he cannot *see* the reason of his dispensations. The drift of all the remarks of Elihu is, that God is a great and inscrutable Sovereign; that he has a right to reign, and that man should submit unqualifiedly to him. In this passage he does not reproach Job harshly. He does not say that he had been guilty of great crimes. He does

*tisement*, I will not offend *any more* :

not affirm that the sentiments of the three friends of Job were correct, or maintain that Job was a hypocrite. He states a *general* truth, which he considers applicable to all, and says that it becomes all who are afflicted to submit to God, and to resolve to offend no more; to go to God with the language of humble confession, and when everything is dark and gloomy in the divine dealings, to implore *his* teachings, and to entreat him to shed light on the path. Hence he says, “It is meet or proper to use this language before God. It becomes man. He should presume that God is right, and that he has some good reasons for his dealings, though they are inscrutable. Even when a sufferer is not to be reckoned among the most vile and wicked; when he is conscious that his general aim has been to do right; and when his external character has been fair, it is to be *presumed to be possible* that he may have sinned. He may not have wholly known himself. He may have indulged in things that were wrong without having been scarcely conscious of it. He may have loved the world too much; may have fixed his affections with idolatrous attachment on his property or friends; may have had a temper such as ought not to be indulged; or he may have relied on what he possessed, and thus failed to recognise his dependence on God. In such cases, it becomes man to have so much confidence in God as to go and acknowledge *his right* to inflict chastisement, and to entreat him to teach the sufferer *why* he is thus afflicted.” ¶ *I have borne chastisement.* The word *chastisement* is not in the Hebrew. The Hebrew is simply *נָסַח*—*I have borne, or I bear.* Umbreit renders it, “I repent.” Some word like *chastisement* or *punishment* must be understood after “I have borne.” The idea evidently is, that a man who is afflicted by God, even when he cannot see the reason *why* he is afflicted, and when he is not conscious that he has been guilty of any particu-

32 *That which* I see not, teach  
 "thou me: if I have done ini-  
 quity, I <sup>x</sup> will do no more.

33 *Should it be* <sup>1</sup> according to  
 "Ps. 32. 8.    x Ep. 4. 22.    <sup>1</sup> from with thee?"

lar sin that led to it, should be willing to regard it as a *proof* that he is guilty, and should examine and correct his life. But there is a great variety of opinion in regard to the meaning of this passage—no less than fifteen different interpretations being enumerated by Schultens. ¶ *I will not offend any more.* אֶל־אִשָּׁא—"I will not act wickedly; I will no more do corruptly." The sense is, that his afflictions should lead him to a resolution to reform his life, and to sin no more. This just and beautiful sentiment is as applicable to us now as it was to the afflicted in the time of Elihu. It is a common thing to be afflicted. Trial often comes upon us when we can see no particular sin which has led to it, and no special reason why *we* should be afflicted rather than others. We should, however, regard it as a proof that there is something in our hearts or lives which may be amended, and should endeavor to ascertain what it is, and resolve to offend no more. Any one, if he will examine himself carefully, can find sufficient reasons why *he* should be visited with the rod of chastisement, and though we may not be able to see why others are preserved from such calamities, yet we can see that there are reasons in abundance why *we* should be recalled from our wanderings.

32. That which *I* see not, teach *thou* me. That is, in regard to my errors and sins. No prayer could be more appropriate than this. It is language becoming every one who is afflicted, and who does not see clearly the reason why it is done. The sense is, that with a full belief that he is liable to error and sin, that he has a wicked and deceitful heart, and that God never afflicts without reason, he should go to him and ask him to show him *why* he has afflicted him. He should not murmur or repine; he should not accuse God of injustice

thy mind? he will recompense it, whether thou refuse, or whether thou choose; and not I: therefore speak what thou knowest.

or partiality; he should not attempt to cloak his offences, but should go and entreat him to make him acquainted with the sins of heart and life which have led to these calamities. Then only will he be in a state of mind in which he will be likely to be profited by trials. ¶ *If I have done iniquity, I will do no more.* Admitting the possibility that he had erred. Who is there that cannot appropriately use this language when he is afflicted?

33. Should it be *according to thy mind?* Marg., as in Heb., "from with thee"—אֶת־לִבִּי. There has been much diversity of opinion in regard to the meaning of this verse. It is exceedingly obscure in the original, and has the appearance of being a proverbial expression. The general sense seems to be, that God will not be regulated in his dealings by what may be the views of man, or by what man might be disposed to choose or refuse. He will act according to his own views of what is right and proper to be done. The phrase, "should it be according to thy mind," means, that it is not to be expected that God will consult the views and feelings of man rather than his own. ¶ *He will recompense it.* He will visit with good or evil, prosperity or adversity, according as he shall judge to be right. ¶ *Whether thou refuse, or whether thou choose.* Whatever may be your preferences or wishes. He will act according to his own views of right. The idea is, that God is absolute and independent, and does according to his own pleasure. He is a just Sovereign, dispensing his favors and appointing calamity, not according to the will of individual men, but holding the scales impartially, and doing what *he* esteems to be right. ¶ *And not I.* Rosenmüller, Drusus, De Wette, and Noyes render this, "And not he," supposing that it refers to God, and means that the arrange-

34 Let men of <sup>1</sup> understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me.

35 Job hath spoken without <sup>y</sup> knowledge, and his words *were*

<sup>1</sup> heart.

y c. 38. 2.

ments which are to affect men should be as *he* pleases, and not such as *man* would prefer. Umbreit explains it as meaning, "It is for you to determine in this matter, not for me. You are the person most interested. I am not particularly concerned. Do you, therefore, speak and determine the matter, if you know what is the truth." The Vulgate renders it, "Will God seek that from thee because it displeases thee? For thou hast begun to speak, not I: for if thou knowest anything better, speak." So Coverdale, "Wilt thou not give a reasonable answer? Art thou afraid of anything, seeing thou beganest first to speak, and not I?" The great difficulty of the whole verse may be seen by consulting Schultens, who gives no less than *seventeen* different interpretations, which have been proposed—his own being different from all others. He renders it, "Lo, he will repay you in your own way; for thou art full of sores—*namque subulceratus es*: which, indeed, thou hast chosen, and not I—and what dost thou know? speak." I confess that I cannot understand the passage, nor do any of the interpretations proposed seem to be free from objections. I would submit the following, however, as a paraphrase made from the Hebrew, and differing somewhat from any interpretation which I have seen, as possibly expressing the true sense of the whole verse. "Shall it be from thee that God will send retribution on it [that is, on human conduct], because thou refusest or art reluctant, or because it is not in accordance with thy views? For thou must choose, and not I. Settle this matter, for it pertains particularly to you, and not to me, and what thou knowest, speak. If thou hast any views in regard to this, let them be expressed, for it is important to know on what principles God deals with men."

without wisdom.

36 My <sup>2</sup> desire is that Job may be tried unto the end because of *his* answers for wicked men.

<sup>2</sup> or, My father, let Job be tried.

34, 35. *Let men of understanding.* Marg., as in Heb., *heart*. The *heart*, as there has been frequent occasion to remark, in the Scriptures, is often used to denote the seat of the mind or soul, as the head is with us. Rosenmüller, Umbreit, and Noyes render this passage as if it were to be taken in connexion with the following verse, "Men of understanding will say, and a wise man who hears my views will unite in saying, 'Job has spoken without knowledge, and his words are without wisdom.'" According to this, the two verses expressed a sentiment in which Elihu supposes every wise man who had attended to him would concur, that what Job had said was not founded in knowledge or on true wisdom.

36. *My desire is.* Marg., "or, *My father, let Job be tried.*" This variation between the text and the margin, arises from the different interpretations affixed to the Hebrew word אָבִי—*âbi*. The Hebrew word commonly means 'father,' and some have supposed that that sense is to be retained here, and then it would be a solemn appeal to God as his Father—expressing the earnest prayer of Elihu that Job might be fully tried. But the difficulties in this interpretation are obvious. (1.) Such a mode of appeal to God occurs nowhere else in the book, and it is little in the spirit of the poem. No particular reason can be assigned why that solemn appeal should be made here, rather than in many other places. (2.) The name *Father*, though often given to God in the Scriptures, is not elsewhere given to him in this book. The probability is, therefore, that the word is from אָחַז—to breathe after, to desire, and means that Elihu desired that Job should have a fair trial. No other similar form of the word, however, occurs. The Vulgate renders it,

37 For he addeth rebellion unto his sin, he clappeth his

hands amongst us, and multiplieth his words against God.

*Pater mi, my father*; the LXX, "But learn, Job, no more to make reply like the foolish;" the Chaldee, *אֲבִי—I desire*. ¶ *May be tried*. That his views may be fully canvassed and examined. He had expressed sentiments which Elihu thought should not be allowed to pass without the most careful examination into their truth and bearing. ¶ *Unto the end*. In the most full and free manner; that the matter should be pursued as far as possible, so that it might be wholly understood. Literally, it means *for ever*—*לְעוֹלָם*. ¶ *Because of his answers for wicked men*. Because of the views which he has expressed, which seem to favor the wicked. Elihu refers to the opinions advanced by Job that God did not punish men in this life, or did not deal with them according to their characters, which he interpreted as giving countenance to wickedness, or as affirming that God was not the enemy of impiety. The Vulgate renders this, "My Father, let Job be tried to the end; do not cease from the man of iniquity;" but the true meaning doubtless is, that Job had uttered sentiments which Elihu understood to favor the wicked, and he was desirous that every trial should be applied to him which would tend to correct his erroneous views.

37. *For he addeth rebellion unto his sin*. To the sin which he had formerly committed, and which has brought these trials upon him, he now adds the sin of murmuring and rebellion against God. Of Job, this was certainly not true to the extent which Elihu intended, but it is a very common case in afflictions. A man is visited with calamity as a chastisement for his sins. Instead of searching out the cause why he is afflicted, or bowing with resignation to the superior wisdom of God when he

cannot see any cause, he regards himself as unjustly dealt with; complains of the government of God as severe, and gives occasion for a severer calamity in some other form. The result is often that he is visited with severe affliction, and is made to see both his original offence and the accumulated guilt which has made a new form of punishment necessary. ¶ *He clappeth his hands amongst us*. To clap the hands is either a signal of applause or triumph, or a mark of indignation, Num. xxiv. 10, or of derision, ch. xxvii. 23. It seems to be used in some such sense here, as expressing contempt or derision for the sentiments of his friends. The meaning is, that instead of treating the subject under discussion with a calm spirit and a disposition to learn the truth and profit by it, he had manifested in relation to the whole matter great disrespect, and had conducted himself like one who attempts to silence others, or who shows his contempt for them by clapping his hands at them. It is scarcely necessary to say, that, notwithstanding all the professed candor and impartiality of Elihu, this is a most unfair representation of the general spirit of Job. That he had sometimes given vent to improper feelings there can be no doubt, but nothing had occurred to justify this statement. ¶ *And multiplieth his words against God*. That is, his arguments are against the justice of his government and dealings. In the peculiar phrase here used—"he multiplieth words," Elihu means, probably, to say, that there was more of words than of argument in what Job had said, and that he was not content even with expressing his improper feelings once, but that he piled words on words, and epithet on epithet, that he might more fully give utterance to his reproachful feelings against his Maker.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

## ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

THIS chapter comprises the third speech of Elihu, in which he examines one of the opinions which he understood Job to advance. It consists of two parts—(1.) A statement of the opinion which he understood Job to maintain, vs. 1—3. This was, that his righteousness was more than God's; and that it was no advantage to be pious, for his religion did not save him at all from affliction. This Elihu regarded as a severe reflection on God and his government, and to this (2) he replies. His reply consists of two parts. *First* (vs. 4—12), that God is supreme. He is so exalted that he cannot be affected by what man does; he reaps no benefit from the service of man, and cannot be injured in any way if he is sinful. He cannot be influenced, therefore, in his dealings by any selfish principles, or any self-interest in the matter. It ought to be *presumed*, therefore, that he is impartial, and there ought to be submission to him. The *second* consideration which Elihu adduces (vs. 13—16) is, that if God does *not* at once interpose and relieve a sufferer; if he does not hear his prayer and take away his calamities, it ought to be supposed that it *may possibly* be because the prayer is not offered in a proper spirit and manner. It ought not at once to be inferred that God is wrong; or that he is indifferent to the character of men, or that it is of no advantage to be pious, but that it may be because there is an improper temper of mind in him who prays. Confidence ought still to be reposed in God, and it *ought* to be supposed that there may be some other reason why he does not interpose and hear the prayer of the sufferer than that he is indifferent to the welfare of his true friends. Elihu concludes, therefore (ver. 16), that Job had spoken without a proper understanding of the subject, and that his argument was rash and vain.

**E**LIHU spake moreover, and said,

2 Thinkest thou this to be right, *that* thou saidst, <sup>a</sup> My righteousness is more than God's?

<sup>a</sup> c 9. 17—34, 16. 12—17, 27. 2—6.

1. *Elihu spake.* Heb., וַיֹּאמֶר — “And he answered;” the word *answer* being used, as it is often in the Scriptures, to denote the commencement of a discourse. We may suppose that Elihu had paused at the close of his second discourse, possibly with a view to see whether there was any disposition to reply.

2. *Thinkest thou this to be right.* This is the point which Elihu now proposes to examine. He therefore solemnly appeals to Job himself to determine whether he could himself say that he thought such a sentiment correct. ¶ *That thou saidst, My righteousness is more than God's?* Job had nowhere said this in so many words, but Elihu regarded it as the substance of what he had said, or thought that what he had said amounted to the same thing. He had dwelt much on his own sincerity and uprightness of life; he had main-

3 For thou saidst, What <sup>b</sup> advantage will it be unto thee? *and*, What profit shall I have, *if* <sup>1</sup> I be cleansed from my sin?

<sup>b</sup> c. 31. 2, &c. <sup>1</sup> or, by it *more than by my sin.*

tained that he had not been guilty of such crimes as to make these calamities deserved, and he had indulged in severe reflections on the dealings of God with him. Comp. ch. ix. 30—35, x. 13—15. All this Elihu interprets as equivalent to saying, that he was more righteous than his Maker. It cannot be denied that Job had given occasion for this interpretation to be put on his sentiments, though it cannot be supposed that he would have affirmed this in so many words.

3. *For thou saidst.* Another sentiment of a similar kind which Elihu proposes to examine. He had already adverted to this sentiment of Job in ch. xxxiv. 9, and examined it at some length, and had shown in reply to it that God could not be unjust, and that there was great impropriety when man presumed to arraign the justice of the Most High. He now adverts to it

4 I will <sup>1</sup> answer thee, and thy companions with thee.

<sup>1</sup> return to thee words.

again, in order to show that God could not be benefited or injured by the conduct of man, and that he was, therefore, under no inducement to treat him otherwise than impartially. ¶ *What advantage will it be unto thee?* See Notes on ch. xxxiv. 9. The phrase "unto thee," refers to Job himself. He had said this to himself; and to his own soul. Such a mode of expression is not uncommon in the Scriptures. ¶ *And, what profit shall I have, if I be cleansed from my sin?* Marg., "or, by it more than by my sin." The Hebrew will admit of either of these interpretations, and the sense is not materially varied. The idea is, that as to good treatment or securing the favor of God under the arrangements of his government, a man might just as well be wicked as righteous. He would be as likely to be prosperous in the world, and to experience the tokens of the divine favor. Job had by no means advanced such a sentiment; but he had maintained that he was treated as if he were a sinner; that the dealings of Providence were *not* in this world in accordance with the character of men; and this was interpreted by Elihu as maintaining that there was no advantage in being righteous, or that a man might as well be a sinner. It was for such supposed sentiments as these that Elihu and the three friends of Job charged him with giving "answers" for wicked men, or maintaining opinions which went to sustain and encourage the wicked. See ch. xxxiv. 36.

4. *I will answer thee.* Marg., *return to thee words.* Elihu meant to explain this more fully than it had been done by the friends of Job, and to show where Job was in error. ¶ *And thy companions with thee.* Eliphaz, in ch. xxii. 2, had taken up the same inquiry, and proposed to discuss the subject, but he had gone at once into severe charges against Job, and been drawn into language of harsh crimination, instead of making the matter clear, and Elihu

5 Look unto the heavens, and see; and behold the clouds *which* are higher than thou.

now proposes to state just how it is, and to remove the objections of Job. It may be doubted, however, whether he was much more successful than Eliphaz had been. The doctrine of the future state, as it is revealed by Christianity, was needful to enable these speakers to comprehend and explain this subject.

5. *Look unto the heavens, and see.* This is the commencement of the reply which Elihu makes to the sentiment which he had understood Job to advance, and which Eliphaz had proposed formerly to examine. The general object of the reply is, to show that God is so great that he cannot be affected with human conduct, and that he has no interest in treating men otherwise than according to character. He is so exalted, that their conduct cannot reach and affect his happiness. It ought to be *presumed*, therefore, since there is no motive to the contrary, that the dealings of God with men would be impartial, and that there *would* be an advantage in serving him—not because men could lay him under *obligation*, but because it was right and proper that such advantage should accrue to them. To impress this view on the mind, Elihu directs Job and his friends to look to the heavens—so lofty, grand, and sublime; to reflect how much higher they are than man; and to remember that the great Creator is *above* all those heavens, and *thus* to see that he is so far exalted that he is not dependent on man; that he cannot be affected by the righteousness or wickedness of his creatures; that his happiness is not dependent on them, and consequently that it is to be presumed that he would act impartially, and treat all men as they deserved. There *would* be, therefore, an advantage in serving God. ¶ *And behold the clouds.* As far above us, and seeming to float in the heavens. The sentiment here is, that one view of the astonishing display of wisdom and power above us

6 If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him? <sup>c</sup> or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him?

7 If <sup>d</sup> thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?

<sup>c</sup> Je. 7. 19.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. 16. 2. Pr. 9. 12.

must extinguish every feeling that he will be influenced in his dealings as men are in theirs, or that he can gain or suffer anything by the good or bad behaviour of his creatures.

6. *If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him?* This should not be interpreted as designed to justify sin, or as saying that there is no evil in it, or that God does not regard it. That is not the point or scope of the remark of Elihu. His object is to show that God is not influenced in his treatment of his creatures as men are in their treatment of each other. He has no interest in being partial, or in treating them otherwise than they deserve. If they sin against him, his happiness is not so marred, that he is under any inducement to interpose *by passion*, or in any other way than that which is *right*.

7. *If thou be righteous, what givest thou him?* The same sentiment substantially as in the previous verses. It is, that God is supreme and independent. He does not desire such benefits from the services of his friends, and is not so dependent on them, as to be induced to interpose in their favor in any way beyond what is strictly proper. It is to be presumed, therefore, that he will deal with them according to what is right, and as it is right that they should experience proofs of his favor, it followed that there *would* be advantage in serving him, and in being delivered from sin; that it *would* be better to be holy than to lead a life of transgression. This reasoning seems to be somewhat abstract, but it is correct, and is as sound now as it was in the time of Elihu. There is no reason why God should not treat men according to their character. He is not so under obligations to his friends, and has not

8 Thy wickedness *may hurt* a man as thou *art*; and thy righteousness *may profit* the son of man.

9 By reason of the multitude of oppressions they make *the oppressed* to cry: they cry out by reason of the arm of the mighty.

such cause to dread his foes; he does not derive so much benefit from the one, or receive such injury from the other, that he is under any inducement to swerve from strict justice; and it follows, therefore, that where there *ought* to be reward, there will be; where there *ought* to be punishment, there will be; and consequently that there is an advantage in being righteous.

8. *Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art.* That is, it may injure him, but not God. He is too far exalted above man, and too independent of man in his sources of happiness, to be affected by what he can do. The object of the whole passage (vs. 6—8) is, to show that God is independent of men, and is not governed in his dealings with them on the principles which regulate their conduct with each other. One man may be greatly benefited by the conduct of another, and may feel under obligation to reward him for it; or he may be greatly injured in his person, property, or reputation, by another, and will endeavour to avenge himself. But nothing of this kind can happen to God. If he rewards, therefore, it must be of his grace and mercy, not because he is laid under obligation; if he inflicts chastisement, it must be because men deserve it, and not because God has been injured. In this reasoning, Elihu undoubtedly refers to Job, whom he regards as having urged a *claim* to a different kind of treatment, because he supposed that he *deserved* it. The general principle of Elihu is clearly correct, that God is entirely independent of men; that neither our good nor evil conduct can affect his happiness, and that consequently his dealings with us are those of impartial justice.

9. *By reason of the multitude of op-*

10 But none saith, Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night;

*pressions they make the oppressed to cry.*

It is not quite easy to see the connexion which this verse has with what goes before, or its bearing on the argument of Elihu. It seems, however, to refer to the *oppressed in general*, and to the fact, to which Job had himself adverted, (ch. xxiv. 12,) that men are borne down by oppression, and that God does not interpose to save them. They are suffered to remain in that state of oppression—trodden down by men, crushed by the arm of a despot, and overwhelmed with poverty, sorrow, and want, and God does not interpose to rescue them. He looks on and sees all this evil, and does not come forth to deliver those who thus suffer. This is a common case, according to the view of Job; this was his own case, and he could not explain it, and in view of it he had indulged in language which Elihu regarded as a severe reflection on the government of the Almighty. He undertakes, therefore, to *explain the reason why men are permitted thus to suffer, and why they are not relieved*. In the verse before us, he states the fact that multitudes *do* thus suffer under the arm of oppression—for that fact could not be denied; in the following verses, he states the *reason* why it is so, and that reason is, that they do not apply in any proper manner to God, who could “give songs in the night,” or joy in the midst of calamities, and who could make them acquainted with the nature of his government as intelligent beings, so that they would be able to understand it and acquiesce in it. The phrase “the multitude of oppressions” refers to the numerous and repeated calamities which tyrants bring upon the poor, the down-trodden, and the slave. The phrases “to cry” and “they cry out,” refer to the lamentations and sighs of those under the arm of the oppressor. Elihu did not dispute the truth of the fact as it was alleged by Job. That fact could not then be doubted any more than it can now, that there were many who were bowed

down under burdens imposed by hard-hearted masters, and groaning under the government of tyrants, and that all this was seen and permitted by a holy God. This fact troubled Job—for he was one of this general class of sufferers; and this fact Elihu proposes to account for. Whether his solution is satisfactory, however, may still admit of a doubt.

10. *But none saith.* That is, none of the oppressed and down-trodden say. This is the solution which Elihu gives of what appeared so mysterious to Job, and of what Elihu regarded as the source of the bitter complaints of Job. The solution is, that when men are oppressed, they do not apply to God with a proper spirit, and look to him that they may find relief. It was a principle with Elihu, that if when a man was afflicted he would apply to God with a humble and penitent heart, he would hear him, and would withdraw his hand. See this principle fully stated in ch. xxxiii. 19—26. This, Elihu now says, was not done by the oppressed, and this, according to him, is the reason why the hand of God is still upon them. ¶ *Where is God my Maker.* That is, they do not appeal to God for relief. They do not inquire for him who alone can help them. This is the reason why they are not relieved. ¶ *Who giveth songs in the night.* Night, in the Scriptures, is an emblem of sin, ignorance, and calamity. Here *calamity* is particularly referred to; and the idea is, that God can give joy, or impart consolation, in the darkest season of trial. He can impart such views of himself and his government as to cause the afflicted even to rejoice in his dealings; he can raise the song of praise even when all external things are gloomy and sad. Comp. Acts xvi. 25. There is great beauty in this expression. It has been verified in thousands of instances where the afflicted have looked up through tears to God, and their mourning has been turned into joy. Especially is it true under the gospel, that in the



11 Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?

12 There they cry, but none

day of darkness and calamity, God puts into the mouth the language of praise, and fills the heart with thanksgiving. No one who has sought comfort in affliction with a right spirit has found it withheld, and all the sad and sorrowful may come to God with the assurance that he can put songs of praise into their lips in the night of calamity. Comp. Ps. cxxvi. 1, 2.

11. *Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth.* Who is able to teach us more than the irrational creation; that is, in regard to the nature and design of affliction. They suffer without knowing why. They are subjected to toil and hardships; endure pain, and die, without any knowledge why all this occurs, and without any rational view of the government and plans of God. It is not, or need not be so, says Elihu, when man suffers. He is intelligent. He can understand why he is afflicted. He has only to make use of his superior endowments, and apply to his Maker, and he will see so much of the reason of his doings that he will acquiesce in the wise arrangement. Perhaps there is an implied reflection here on those who suffered generally, as if they manifested no more intelligence than the brute creation. They make no use of their intellectual endowments. They do not examine the nature of the divine administration, and they do not apply to God for instruction and help. If they should do so, he would teach them so that they would acquiesce and rejoice in his government and dealings. According to this view, the meaning is, that if men suffer without relief and consolation, it is to be attributed to their stupidity and unwillingness to look to God for light and aid, and not at all to his injustice.

12. *There they cry.* They cry out in the language of complaint, but not for mercy. ¶ *Because of the pride of evil*

giveth answer, because of the pride of evil men.

13 Surely God will not <sup>c</sup> hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.

*c* Is. 1. 15.

*men.* That is, of their own pride. The pride of men so rebellious, and so disposed to complain of God, is the reason why they do not appeal to him to sustain them and give them relief. This is still as true as it was in the time of Elihu. The pride of the heart, even in affliction, is the true reason with multitudes why they do not appeal to God, and why they do not pray. They have valued themselves on their independence of spirit. They have been accustomed to rely on their own resources. They have been unwilling to recognise their dependence on any being whatever. Even in their trials, the heart is too wicked to acknowledge God, and they would be ashamed to be known to do what they regard as so weak a thing as *to pray*. Hence they murmur in their afflictions; they linger on in their sufferings without consolation, and then die without hope. However inapplicable, therefore, this solution of the difficulty may have been to the case of Job, it is not inapplicable to the case of multitudes of sufferers. *Many of the afflicted have no peace or consolation in their trials—no "songs in the night"—BECAUSE THEY ARE TOO PROUD TO PRAY!*

13. *Surely God will not hear vanity.* A vain, hollow, heartless petition. The object of Elihu here is to account for the reason why sufferers are not relieved—having his eye, doubtless, on the case of Job as one of the most remarkable of the kind. The solution which he here gives of the difficulty is, that it is not consistent for God to hear a prayer where there is no sincerity. Of the *truth* of the remark there can be no doubt, but he seems to have taken it for granted that all prayers offered by unrelieved sufferers are thus insincere and hollow. This was needful in his view to account for the fact under consideration, and this he assumes as being

14 Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him, yet <sup>f</sup> judgment is before him; therefore trust thou in him.

*f* Ps. 77. 5—10.

unquestionable. Yet the very point indispensable to make out his case was, that *in fact* the prayers offered by such persons were insincere.

14. *Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him.* This is addressed to Job, and is designed to entreat him to trust in God. Elihu seems to refer to some remark that Job had made, like that in ch. xxiii. 8, seq., where he said that he could not come near him, nor bring his cause before him. If he went to the east, the west, the north, or the south, he could not see him, and could get no opportunity of bringing his cause before him. See Notes on that place. Elihu here says that though it is true in fact that God is invisible, yet this ought not to be regarded as a reason why he should not confide in him. The argument of Elihu here—which is undoubtedly sound—is, that the fact that God is invisible should not be regarded as any evidence that he does not attend to the affairs of men, or that he is not worthy of our love. ¶ *Judgment is before him.* He is a God of justice, and will do that which is right. ¶ *Therefore trust him.* Though he is invisible, and though you cannot bring your cause directly before him. The word which is here used (הוֹלִי, from חָלַל) means to turn round; to twist; to be firm—as a rope is that is twisted; and then to wait or delay—that is, to be firm in patience. Here it may have this meaning, that Job was to be firm and unmoved, patiently waiting for the time when the now invisible God would interpose in his behalf, though he could not now see him. The idea is, that we may trust the invisible God, or that we should patiently wait for him to manifest himself in our behalf, and may leave all our interests in his hands, with the feeling that they are entirely safe. It must be admitted that Job had not learned this lesson as fully as it might have been learned, and

15 But now, because it is not so, <sup>1</sup> he hath visited in his anger; yet he <sup>2</sup> knoweth it <sup>g</sup> not in great extremity:

<sup>1</sup> i. e., God. <sup>2</sup> i. e., Job. *g* Hos. 11. 8, 9.

that he had evinced an undue anxiety for some public *manifestation* of the favor and friendship of God, and that he had not shown quite the willingness which he should have done to commit his interests into his hands, though he was unseen.

15. *But now, because it is not so.* This verse, as it stands in our authorized translation, conveys no intelligible idea. It is evident that the translators meant to give a literal version of the Hebrew, but without understanding its sense. An examination of the principal words and phrases may enable us to ascertain the idea which was in the mind of Elihu when it was uttered. The phrase in the Hebrew here (וְעַתָּה כִּי אֵין) may mean, “but now it is as nothing,” and is to be connected with the following clause, denoting “now it is comparatively nothing that he has visited you in his anger;” that is, the punishment which he has inflicted on you is almost as nothing compared with what it might have been, or what you have deserved. Job had complained much, and Elihu says to him, that so far from having cause of complaint, his sufferings were as nothing—scarcely worth noticing, compared with what they might have been. ¶ *He hath visited in his anger.* Marg., i. e., God. The word rendered “hath visited” (בָּרַךְ) means to visit for any purpose—for mercy or justice; to review, take an account of, or investigate conduct. Here it is used with reference to punishment—meaning that the punishment which he had inflicted was trifling compared with the desert of the offences. ¶ *Yet he knoweth it not.* Marg., i. e., Job. The marginal reading here is undoubtedly erroneous. The reference is not to Job, but to God; and the idea is, that he did not *know*, that is, did not *take full account* of the sins of Job. He passed them over, and did not bring them all into the account in his dealings

16 Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain; he multiplieth words without knowledge.

with him. Had he done this, and marked every offence with the utmost strictness and severity, his punishment would have been much more severe. ¶ *In great extremity.* The Hebrew here is *מְאֵד מְאֵד*. The word *מְאֵד*, *pash*, occurs nowhere else in the Hebrew. The Septuagint renders it *παράπτωμα*, *offence*, and the Vulgate *scelus*, i. e., *transgression*. The authors of those versions evidently read it as if it were *מִשְׁעָר*, *iniquity*; and it may be that the final *ר* has been dropped, like *שׁ* for *שׁוּ*, in Job xv. 31. *Gesenius.* Theodotion and Symmachus in like manner render it *transgression*. Others have regarded it as if from *מְאֵד*, *to be proud*, and as meaning *in pride*, or *arrogance*; and others, as the Rabbins generally, as if from *מְאֵד*, *to disperse*, meaning *on account of the multitude*, scil., of transgressions. So Rosenmüller, Umbreit, Luther, and the Chaldee. It seems probable to me that the interpretation of the Septuagint and the Vulgate is the correct one, and

that the sense is, that he “does not take cognizance severely (*מְאֵד*) of transgressions;” that is, that he had not done it in the case of Job. This interpretation agrees with the scope of the passage, and with the view which Elihu meant to express—that God, so far from having given any just cause of complaint, had not even dealt with him as his sins deserved. Without any impeachment of his wisdom or goodness, his inflictions *might* have been far more severe.

16. *Therefore.* In view of all that Elihu had now said, he came to the conclusion that the views of Job were erroneous, and that he had no just cause of complaint. He had suffered no more than he had deserved; he might have obtained a release or mitigation if he had applied to God; and the government of God was just, and was every way worthy of confidence. The remarks of Job, therefore, complaining of the severity of his sufferings and of the government of God, were not based on knowledge, and had, in fact, no solid foundation.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

THIS chapter is the commencement of the fourth speech of Elihu, which continues to the close of ch. xxxvii., when the subject is taken up by God himself. The object of this whole speech is to vindicate the justice of God in his dealings; and this is done mainly by showing that he has shown so much wisdom in the creation and government of the world, that men ought to have confidence in him, and to submit to him. This argument is pressed particularly in ch. xxxvi. 26—33, and in the whole of ch. xxxvii., where Elihu goes into an examination of the things in the works of God which show his inscrutable wisdom.

In this chapter, the argument consists of the following parts:—

I. The introduction—where Elihu proposes to speak on behalf of God, and says that he will not deal in commonplace remark, but will bring his illustrations from subjects beyond the ordinary range of thinking. The idea is, that he has some views of the divine government, which show that God is great, and just, and wise, and has a claim to confidence, vs. 1—4.

II. He affirms that God is just in his dealings; that he is the watchful guardian over the conduct of men; that whether men be on the throne, or bound in fetters and chains, he equally observes them, and deals justly with them; and that if they had been guilty of crime, he takes measures to reclaim them, and to bring them to forsake their iniquity, vs. 5—14.

III. He affirms that God deals gently with the poor, the humble, and the contrite; and that if

Job had manifested that spirit, he would have been merciful to him, and would have brought him out of his calamities. Having stated this general principle, he concludes that the true reason why Job continued thus to be afflicted was, that he was obstinate, and refused to repent of his sins under the chastisement of the divine hand, vs. 15—17. In this the view which Elihu takes of the nature and design of affliction differs from that taken by the friends of Job. *They* held that it was full proof of guilt and hypocrisy, *he* maintained that it was disciplinary in its nature; *they* affirmed that it demonstrated only that the sufferer was a sinner, *he* that if the sufferer was penitent, he might again obtain the divine favor; *they* maintained that the true cause of the severe and protracted nature of the sufferings of Job was that he *had been* in his former life a man of eminent guilt. *Elihu* maintained that the reason why he suffered so much and so long was because the discipline had failed of its object, and he did not return with a humble and penitent heart to God.

IV. Elihu, therefore, exhorts Job with great earnestness to beware lest his obstinacy end in his ruin. God would not change, and if he persevered in his unyielding state of mind, the result must be destruction. That destruction was so great, that if it came upon him, a great ransom could not rescue him; great riches could not save from it, nor the forces of strength recover him, vs. 18—21.

V. He then reminds Job that God is wise. None could teach like him; none had prescribed his way for him; and it became man to magnify his Maker, and to acknowledge him, vs. 22—25.

VI. The chapter is closed by the commencement of an argument respecting the inscrutable dealings of God, vs. 26—33. This argument is continued through the next chapter, and consists of appeals to his works, as being beyond our comprehension. Elihu refers, in this chapter, to the rain, the dew, the clouds, the light, the thunder, and the vapor, to show that we cannot understand his works. The design of the whole of this argument is to show that God is far above us; and that we should, therefore, bow with submission to his will. See ch. xxxvii. 23, 24.

**E**LIHU also proceeded, and said,

2 Suffer me a little, and I

will shew thee that <sup>1</sup> *I have yet to speak on God's behalf.*

<sup>1</sup> *there are yet words for God.*

1. *Elihu also proceeded.* Heb., *added*—נִסְּף. Vulg., *addens*; LXX, Προσθεῖς—*adding, or proceeding.* The Hebrew commentators remark that this word is used because this speech is *added* to the number which it might be supposed he would make. There had been *three* series of speeches by Job and his friends, and in each one of them Job had spoken three times. Each one of the three friends had also spoken thrice, except Zophar, who failed to reply when it came to his turn. Elihu had also now made three speeches, and here he would naturally have closed, but it is remarked that he *added* this to the usual number.

2. *Suffer me a little.* Even beyond the regular order of speaking; or, allow me to go on, though I have fully occupied my place in the *number* of speeches. Jarchi remarks that this verse is *Chaldaic*, and it is worthy of observation that the principal words in it are not those ordinarily used in Hebrew to express the same thought, but are such as occur in the Chaldaic. The word rendered *suffer* (סָפַר) has here a significa-

tion which occurs only in Syriac and Chaldee. It properly means in Hebrew, to *surround*, in a hostile sense. Judges xx. 43; Ps. xxii. 13; then in Hiph. to crown oneself. In Syriac and Chaldee, it means to *wait*—perhaps from the idea of going round and round—and this is the meaning here. He wished them not to remit their attention, but to have patience with what he would yet say. ¶ *And I will shew thee that.* Marg., “there are yet words for God.” The Hebrew is, “And I will show you that there are yet words for God;” that is, that there were yet many considerations which could be urged in vindication of his government. The idea of Elihu is not so much that *he* had much to say, as that, in fact, there was much that *could be* said for him. He regarded his character and government as having been attacked, and he believed that there were ample considerations which could be urged in its defence. The word which is here rendered, “I will show thee” (אֶרְאֶהְךָ), is also Chaldee in its signification. It is from אָרָה (Chald.) not used in Kal, but it occurs in other

3 I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.

4 For truly my words *shall* not be false: he that is perfect in

forms in the Chaldee portion of the Scriptures. See Dan. ii. 11, 16, 24, 27. The use of these Chaldee words is somewhat remarkable, and perhaps may throw some light on the question about the time and place of the composition of the book.

3. *I will fetch my knowledge from afar.*

What I say shall not be mere commonplace. It shall be the result of reflection on subjects that lie out of the ordinary range of thought. The idea is, that he did not mean to go over the ground that had been already trodden, or to suggest such reflections as would occur to any one, but that he meant to bring his illustrations from abstruser matters, and from things that had escaped their attention. He, in fact, appeals to the various operations of nature—the rain, the dew, the light, the instincts of the animal creation, the vicissitudes of the seasons, the laws of heat and cold, and shows that all these prove that God is inscrutably wise and gloriously great. ¶ *And will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.* That is, I will show that these things to which I now appeal, *prove* that he is righteous, and is worthy of universal confidence. Perhaps, also, he means to contrast the result of his reflections with those of Job. He regarded him as having charged his Maker with injustice and wrong. Elihu says that it was a fixed principle with him to ascribe righteousness to God, and that he believed it could be fully sustained by an appeal to his works. Man should *presume* that his Maker is good, and wise, and just; he should be *willing* to find that he is so; he should *expect* that the result of the profoundest investigation of his ways and works will prove that he is so—and in such an investigation he will never be disappointed. A man is in no good frame of mind, and is not likely to be led to any good result in his investigations, when he *begins* his in-

knowledge *is* with thee.

5 Behold, God *is* mighty, and despiseth not *any*: he <sup>a</sup> is mighty in strength and <sup>1</sup> wisdom.

a Jer. 32. 19.

<sup>1</sup> heart.

quiries by believing that his Maker *is* unjust, and who *prosecutes* them with the hope and expectation that he will find him to be so. Yet do men never do this?

4. *For truly my words shall not be false.* This is designed to conciliate attention. It is a professed purpose to state nothing but truth. Even in order to vindicate the ways of God, he would state nothing but what would bear the most rigid examination. Job had charged on his friends a purpose “to speak wickedly for God;” to make use of unsound arguments in vindicating his cause, (see Notes on ch. xiii. 7, 8,) and Elihu now says that *he* will make use of no such reasoning, but that all that he says shall be founded in strict truth. ¶ *He that is perfect in knowledge is with thee.* This refers undoubtedly to Elihu himself, and is a claim to a clear understanding of the subject. He did not doubt that he was right, and that he had some views which were worthy of their attention. The main idea is, that he was of sound knowledge; that his views were not sophistical and captious; that they were founded in truth, and were worthy, therefore, of their profound attention.

5. *Behold, God is mighty.* This is the first consideration which Elihu urges, and the purpose seems to be to affirm that God is so great that he has no occasion to modify his treatment of any class of men from a reference to himself. He is wholly independent of all, and can therefore be impartial in his dealings. If it were otherwise; if he were dependent on men for any share of his happiness, he might be tempted to show special favor to the great and to the rich; to spare the mighty who are wicked, though he cut off the poor. But he has no such inducement, as he is wholly independent; and it is to be presumed, therefore, that he treats all impartially. See Notes on ch. xxxv.

6 He preserveth not the life of the wicked: but giveth right to the <sup>1</sup> poor.

7 He <sup>b</sup> withdraweth not his

<sup>1</sup> or, *afflicted*.

<sup>b</sup> He. 13. 5.

5—8. ¶ *And despiseth not any.* None who are poor and humble. He does not pass them by with cold neglect because they are poor and powerless, and turn his attention to the great and mighty because he is dependent on them. ¶ He is *mighty in—wisdom.* Marg., *heart.* The word *heart* in Hebrew is often used to denote the intellectual powers; and the idea here is, that God has perfect wisdom in the management of his affairs. He is acquainted with all the circumstances of his creatures, and passes by none from a defect of knowledge, or from a want of wisdom to know how to adopt his dealings to their condition.

6. *He preserveth not the life of the wicked.* Elihu here maintains substantially the same sentiment which the three friends of Job had done, that the dealings of God in this life are in accordance with character, and that strict justice is thus maintained. ¶ *But giveth right to the poor.* Marg., “or *afflicted*.” The Hebrew word often refers to the afflicted, to the humble, or the lowly; and the reference here is to the *lower classes* of society. The idea is, that God deals justly with them, and does not overlook them because they are so poor and feeble that they cannot contribute anything to him. In this sentiment Elihu was undoubtedly right, though, like the three friends of Job, he seems to have adopted the principle that the dealings of God here are according to the *characters* of men. He had some views in advance of theirs. He saw that affliction is designed for *discipline* (ch. xxxiii.); that God is willing to show mercy to the sufferer on repentance; that he is not dependent on men, and that his dealings cannot be graduated by any reference to what he would receive or suffer from men; but still he clung to the idea that the dealings of God here are a proof of the character of the afflicted. What was mys-

eyes from the righteous: but with kings *are they* on the throne; yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.

terious about it he resolves into sovereignty, and showed that man *ought* to be submissive to God, and to *believe* that he was qualified to govern. He lacked the views which Christianity has furnished, that the inequalities that appear in the divine dealings here will be made clear in the retributions of another world.

7. *He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous.* That is, he constantly observes them, whether they are in the more elevated or humble ranks of life. Even though he afflicts them, his eye is upon them, and he does not forsake them. It will be remembered that one of the difficulties to be accounted for was, that they who professed to be righteous, are subjected to severe trials. The friends of Job had maintained that such a fact was, in itself, proof that they who professed to be pious were not so, but were hypocrites. Job had verged to the other extreme, and had said that it looked as if God had forsaken those that loved him, and that there was no advantage in being righteous. Notes, ch. xxxv. 2. Elihu takes a middle ground, and says that neither was the correct opinion. It is true, he says, that the righteous are afflicted, but they are not forsaken. The eye of God is still upon them, and he watches over them, whether on the throne or in dungeons, in order to *bring good results* out of their trials. ¶ *But with kings are they on the throne.* That is, if the righteous are in the state of the highest earthly honor and prosperity, God is with them, and is their protector and friend. The same thing Elihu, in the following verses, says is true respecting the righteous, when they are in the most down-trodden and depressed condition. ¶ *Yea, he doth establish them for ever.* The meaning of this is, that they are regarded by God with favor. When righteous kings *are* thus prospered, and have a

8 And if <sup>c</sup> *they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction;*

9 Then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded.

c Ps. 107. 10.

permanent and peaceful reign, it is God who gives this prosperity to them. They are under his watchful eye, and his protecting hand.

8. *And if they be bound in fetters.* That is, if the righteous are thrown into prison, and are subjected to oppressions and trials, or if they are chained down, as it were, on a bed of pain, or crushed by heavy calamities. the eye of God is still upon them. Their sufferings should not be regarded either as proof that they are hypocrites, or that God is regardless of them, and is indifferent whether men are good or evil. The true solution of the difficulty was, that God was then accomplishing purposes of discipline, and that happy results would follow if they would receive affliction in a proper manner.

9. *Then he sheweth them their work.* What their lives have been. This he does either by a messenger sent to them, (ch. xxxiii. 23,) or by their own reflections, (ch. xxxiii. 27,) or by the influences of his Spirit leading them to a proper review of their lives. The object of their affliction, Elihu says, is to bring them to see what their conduct has been, and to reform what has been amiss. It should not be interpreted either as proof that the afflicted are eminently wicked, as the friends of Job maintained, or as furnishing an occasion for severe reflections on the divine government, such as Job had indulged in. It is all consistent with an equitable and kind administration; with the belief that the afflicted have true piety—though they have wandered and erred; and with the conviction that God is dealing with them in mercy, and not in the severity of wrath. They need only recall the errors of their lives; humble themselves, and exercise

10 He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.

11 If they obey and serve *him*, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures.

true repentance, and they would find afflictions to be among even their richest blessings. ¶ *Transgressions that they have exceeded.* Or, rather, "he shows them their transgressions, that *they have been very great*;" that they have made themselves great, mighty, strong — הַקָּדוֹשׁ. The idea is, that their transgressions had been allowed to accumulate, or to become strong, until it was necessary to interpose in this manner, and check them by severe affliction. All this was consistent, however, with the belief that the sufferer was truly pious, and might find favor if he would repent.

10. *He openeth also their ear to discipline.* To teaching; or he makes them willing to learn the lessons which their afflictions are designed to teach. Comp. Notes on ch. xxxiii. 16.

11. *If they obey and serve him.* That is, if, as the result of their afflictions, they repent of their sins, seek his mercy, and serve him in time to come, they shall be prospered still. The design of affliction, Elihu says, is, not to cut them off, but to bring them to repentance. This sentiment he had advanced and illustrated before at greater length. See Notes on ch. xxxiii. 23—28. The object of all this is, doubtless, to assure Job that he should not regard his calamities either as proof that he had never understood religion—as his friends maintained; or that God was severe, and did not regard those that loved and obeyed him—as Job had seemed to suppose; but that there was something in his life and conduct which made discipline necessary, and that if he would repent of that, he would find returning prosperity, and end his days in happiness and peace.

12 But if they obey not, they shall perish <sup>1</sup> by the sword, and they shall die without knowledge.

<sup>1</sup> pass away.

12. *But if they obey not.* If those who are afflicted do not turn to God, and yield him obedience, they must expect that he will continue their calamities until they are cut off. ¶ *They shall perish by the sword.* Marg., as in Heb., *pass away.* The word rendered *sword* (רֶמֶס) means, properly, *anything sent*—as a spear or an arrow—a *missile*—and then an instrument of war in general. It may be applied to any weapon that is used to produce death. The idea here is, that the man who was afflicted on account of the sins which he had committed, and who did not repent of them and turn to God, would be cut off. God would not withdraw his hand unless he acknowledged his offences. As he had undertaken the work of discipline, he could not consistently do it, for it would be, in fact, *yielding* the point to him whom he chastised. This *may* be the case now, and the statement here made by Elihu may involve a principle which will explain the cause of the death of many persons, even of the professedly pious. They are devoted to gain or amusement; they seek the honors of the world for their families or themselves, and, in fact, they make no advances in piety, and are doing nothing for the cause of religion. God lays his hand upon them at first gently. They lose their health, or a part of their property. But the discipline is not effectual. He then lays his hand on them with more severity, and takes from them an endeared child. Still, all is ineffectual. The sorrow of the affliction passes away, and they mingle again in the gay and busy scenes of life as worldly as ever, and exert no influence in favor of religion. Another blow is needful, and blow after blow is struck; but nothing overcomes their worldliness, nothing makes them devotedly and sincerely useful, and it becomes necessary to remove them from the world. ¶ *They*

13 But the hypocrites in heart heap <sup>d</sup> up wrath: they cry not when he bindeth them.

<sup>d</sup> Rom. 2. 5.

*shall die without knowledge.* That is, without any true knowledge of the plans and government of God, or of the reasons why he brought these afflictions upon them. In all their suffering they never *saw* the design. They complained, and murmured, and charged God with severity, but they never understood that the affliction was intended for their own benefit.

13. *But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath.* By their continued impiety they lay the foundation for increasing and multiplied expressions of the divine displeasure. Instead of confessing their sins when they are afflicted, and seeking for pardon; instead of returning to God and becoming truly his friends, they remain impenitent, unconverted, and are rebellious at heart. They complain of the divine government and plans, and their feelings and conduct make it necessary for God farther to interpose, until they are finally cut off and consigned to ruin. Elihu had stated what was the effect in two classes of persons who were afflicted. There were those who were truly pious, and who would receive affliction as sent from God for purposes of discipline, and who would repent and seek his mercy, ver. 11. There were those, as a second class, who were openly wicked, and who would not be benefited by afflictions, and who would thus be cut off, ver. 12. He says, also, that there was a third class—the class of hypocrites, who also were not profited by afflictions, and who would only by their perverseness and rebellion heap up wrath. It is possible that he may have designed to include Job in this number, as his three friends had done, but it seems more probable that he meant merely to suggest to Job that there *was* such a class, and to turn his mind to the possibility that he might be of the number. In explaining the design and effect of afflictions, it was at least proper to re-



14 They <sup>1</sup> die in youth, <sup>c</sup> and their life is among the <sup>2</sup> unclean.

15 He delivereth the <sup>3</sup> poor in his affliction, and openeth their

<sup>1</sup> their soul dieth.

<sup>2</sup> Sodomites, De. 23. 17.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. 55. 23.

<sup>3</sup> or, afflicted.

fer to this class, since it could not be doubted that there were men of this description. ¶ *They cry not when he bindeth them.* They do not cry to God with the language of penitence when he binds them down by calamities. See ver. 8.

14. *They die in youth.* Marg., *their soul dieth.* The word *soul* or *life* in the Hebrew is used to denote oneself. The meaning is, that they would soon be cut down, and share the lot of the openly wicked. If they amended their lives, they might be spared, and continue to live in prosperity and honor; if they did not, whether openly wicked or hypocrites, they would be early cut off. ¶ *And their life is among the unclean.* Marg., *Sodomites.* The idea is, that they would be treated in the same way as the most abandoned and vile of the race. No special favor would be shown to them because they were professors of religion, nor would this fact be a shield against the treatment which they deserved. They could not be classed with the righteous, and must, therefore, share the fate of the most worthless and wicked of the race. The word rendered *unclean* (כִּזְיוֹן) is from כָּדַשׁ—*kadhash*, to be pure or holy; and in Hiph., to regard as holy, to consecrate, or devote to the service of God, as *e. g.*, a priest. Ex. xxviii. 41, xxix. 1. Then it means to consecrate or devote to any service or purpose, as to an idol god. Hence it means one consecrated or devoted to the service of Astarte, the goddess of the Sidonians, or Venus, and as this worship was corrupt and licentious, the word means one who is licentious or corrupt. Comp. Deut. xxiii. 18; 1 Kings xiv. 24; Gen. xxxviii. 21, 22. Here it means the licentious, the corrupt, the abandoned; and the idea is, that if hypocrites did not repent under the inflictions of divine judgment, they

ears in oppression:

16 Even so would he have removed thee out of the strait into a broad <sup>f</sup> place, where *there is no*

*f* Ps. 31. 8.

would be dealt with in the same way as the most abandoned and vile. On the evidence that licentiousness constituted a part of the ancient worship of idols, see Spencer *de Legg. ritual. Hebraeor.* Lib. ii. cap. iii. pp. 613, 614. Ed. 1732. Jerome renders this, *inter effeminatos.* The LXX, strangely enough, "Let their life be wounded by angels."

15. *He delivereth the poor in his affliction.* Marg., "or afflicted." This accords better with the usual meaning of the Hebrew word (עָנִי), and with the connexion. The inquiry was not particularly respecting the *poor*, but the *afflicted*, and the sentiment which Elihu is illustrating is, that when the afflicted call upon God, he will deliver them. The object is to induce Job to make such an application to God that he might be rescued from his calamities, and be permitted yet to enjoy life and happiness. ¶ *And openeth their ears.* Causes them to understand the nature of his government, and the reasons why he visits them in this manner. Comp. ch. xxxiii. 16, 23—27. The sentiment here is a mere repetition of what Elihu had more than once before advanced. It is his leading thought; the *principle* on which he undertakes to explain the reason why God afflicts men, and by which he proposes to remove the difference between Job and his friends. ¶ *In oppression.* This word expresses too much. It refers to God, and implies that there was something oppressive, harsh, or cruel in his dealings. This is not the idea of Elihu in the language which he uses. The word which he uses here (צָרָה) means that which crushes; then straits, distress, affliction. Jerome, *in tribulatione.* The word *affliction* would express the thought.

16. *Even so would he have removed thee.* That is, if you had been patient

straitness; and<sup>1</sup> that which should be set on thy table <sup>s</sup> *should be full of fatness.*

<sup>1</sup> *the rest of thy table.*

g Ps. 23. 5.

and resigned, and if you had gone to him with a broken heart. Having stated the *principles* in regard to affliction which he held to be indisputable, and having affirmed that God was ever ready to relieve the sufferer if he would apply to him with a proper spirit, it was natural to infer from this that the reason why Job *continued* to suffer was, that he did not manifest a proper spirit in his trials. Had he done this, Elihu says, the hand of God would have been long since withdrawn, and his afflictions would have been removed. ¶ *Out of the strait into a broad place.* From the narrow, pent-up way, where it is impossible to move, into a wide and open path. Afflictions are compared with a narrow path, in which it is impossible to get along; prosperity with a broad and open road in which there are no obstructions. Comp. Ps. xviii. 19, xxxi. 8. ¶ *And that which should be set on thy table.* Marg., *the rest of thy table.* The Hebrew word (רָחַץ)—from רָחַץ, *to rest*, and in Hiph., *to set down*, *to cause to rest*) means properly *a letting or setting down*; and then that which is set down—as e. g., food on a table. This is the idea here, that the food which would be set on his table would be rich and abundant; that is, he would be restored to prosperity, if he evinced a penitent spirit in his trials, and confessed his sins to God. The same image of piety occurs in Ps. xxiii. 5, “Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.”

17. *But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked.* Rosenmüller explains this as meaning, “If under divine inflictions and chastisements you wish to imitate the obduracy of the wicked, then the cause and the punishment will mutually sustain themselves; that is, the one will be commensurate with the other.” But it is not necessary to regard this as a *supposition*. It has

17 But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked: judgment and justice <sup>2</sup> take *hold on thee.*

<sup>2</sup> or, *should uphold thee.*

rather the aspect of an affirmation, meaning to express the fact that Job *had*, as Elihu feared, evinced the same spirit in his trials which the wicked do. He had not seen in him evidence of penitence and of a desire to return to God, but had heard complaints and murmurings, such as the wicked indulge in. He had “filled up,” or “fulfilled,” the judgment of the wicked; that is, he had in no way come short of the opinion which *they* expressed of the divine dealings. Still it is possible that the word “if” may be here understood, and that Elihu means merely to state that *if* Job should manifest the same spirit with the wicked, instead of a spirit of penitence, he would have reason to apprehend the same doom which they experience. ¶ *Judgment and justice take hold on thee.* Marg., “or, *should uphold thee.*” The Hebrew word here rendered *take*—יָחַץ, is from יָחַץ—to take hold of, to obtain, to hold fast, to support. Rosenmüller and Gesenius suppose that the word here has a *reciprocal* sense, and means they take hold of each other, or sustain each other. Prof. Lee renders it, “Both judgment and justice will uphold this;” that is, the sentiment which he had just advanced, that Job had filled up the judgment of the wicked. Umbreit renders it, “If thou art full of the opinion of the wicked, then the opinion and justice will rapidly follow each other.”

“Doch wenn du voll bist von des Frevlers Urtheil,  
So werden Urtheil und Gericht schnell auf einander folgen.”

According to this, the meaning is, that if Job held the opinions of wicked men, he must expect that these opinions would be rapidly followed by judgment, or that they would go together, and support each other. This seems to me to be in accordance with the connexion, and to express the

18 Because *there is wrath, beware* lest he take thee away with *his* stroke: then a great ransom cannot <sup>1</sup> deliver thee.

<sup>1</sup> *turn thee aside.*

thought which Elihu meant to convey. It is a sentiment which is undoubtedly true—that if a man holds the sentiments, and manifests the spirit of the wicked, he must expect to be treated as they are.

18. *Because there is wrath.* That is, the wrath of God is to be dreaded. The meaning is, that if Job persevered in the spirit which he had manifested, he had every reason to expect that God would suddenly cut him off. He might now repent and find mercy, but he had shown the spirit of those who were rebellious in affliction, and if he persevered in that, he had nothing to expect but the wrath of God. ¶ *With his stroke.* With his smiting or chastisement. Comp. ch. xxxiv. 26. ¶ *Then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.* Marg., *turn thee aside.* The meaning is, that a great ransom could not prevent him from being cut off. On the meaning of the word *ransom*, see Notes on ch. xxxiii. 24. The idea here is, not that a great ransom could not deliver him *after* he was cut off and consigned to hell—which would be true; but that *when* he had manifested a spirit of insubmission a little longer, nothing could save him from being cut off *from the land of the living*. God would not spare him on account of wealth, or rank, or age, or wisdom. None of these things would be a *ransom* in virtue of which his forfeited life would be preserved.

19. *Will he esteem thy riches?* That is, God will not regard thy riches as a reason why he should not cut you off, or as a ransom for your forfeited life. The reference here must be to the fact that Job *had been* a rich man, and the meaning is, either that God would not spare him because he *had been* a rich man, or that if he had now all the wealth which he once possessed, it would not be sufficient to be a ransom

19 Will he esteem thy riches? <sup>h</sup> *no*, not gold, nor all the forces of strength.

20 Desire not the night, when people are cut off in their place.

h Pr. 11. 4.

for his life. ¶ *Nor all the forces of strength.* Not all that gives power and influence to a man—wealth, age, wisdom, reputation, authority, and rank. The meaning is, that God would not regard any of these when a man was rebellious in affliction, and refused in a proper manner to acknowledge his Maker. Of the truth of what is here affirmed, there can be no doubt. Riches, rank, and honors cannot redeem the life of a man. They do not save him from the grave, and from all that is gloomy and revolting there. When God comes forth to deal with mankind, he does not regard their gold, their rank, their splendid robes or palaces, but he deals with them as *men*—and the gay, the beautiful, the rich, the noble, moulder back, under his hand, to their native dust, in the same manner as the most humble peasant. How forcibly should this teach us not to set our hearts on wealth, and not to seek the honors and wealth of the world as our portion!

20. *Desire not the night.* That is, evidently, *the night of death*. The darkness of the night is an emblem of death, and it is not uncommon to speak of death in this manner. See John ix. 4, “The night cometh when no man can work.” Elihu seems to have supposed that Job might have looked forward to death as to a time of release; that so far from *dreading* what he had said would come, that God would cut him off at a stroke, it might be the very thing which he desired, and which he anticipated would be an end of his sufferings. Indeed, Job had more than once expressed some such sentiment, and Elihu designs to meet that state of mind, and to charge him not to look forward to death as relief. If his present state of mind continued, he says, he would perish under the “wrath” of God; and death in such a manner,

## 21 Take heed, regard not ini-

great as might be his sufferings here, could not be desirable. ¶ *When people are cut off in their place.* On this passage, Schulzens enumerates no less than fifteen different interpretations which have been given, and at the end of this enumeration remarks, that he "waits for clearer light to overcome the shades of this night." Rosenmüller supposes it means, "Long not for the night, in which nations go under themselves;" that is, in which they go down to the inferior regions, or in which they perish. Noyes renders it, "To which nations are taken away to their place." Umbreit renders it, "Pant not for the night, to go down to the people who dwell under thee;" that is, to the Shades, or to those that dwell in Sheol. Prof. Lee translates it, "Pant not for the night, for the rising of the populace from their places." Coverdale, "Prolong not thou the time, till there come a night for thee to set other people in thy stead." The LXX, "Do not draw out the night, that the people may come instead of them;" that is, to their assistance. Dr. Good, "Neither long thou for the night, for the vaults of the nations underneath them;" and supposes that the reference is to the *catacombs*, or mummy pits that were employed for burial-places. These are but specimens of the interpretations which have been proposed for this passage, and it is easy to see that there is little prospect of being able to explain it in a satisfactory manner. The principal difficulty in the passage is in the word rendered *cut off* (נִכְרַת), which means, *to go up, to ascend*, and in the incongruity between that and the word rendered *in their place* (תַּחֲתָם), which literally means, *under them*. A literal translation of the passage is, "Do not desire the night to ascend to the people under them;" but I confess that I cannot understand the passage, after all the attempts made to explain it. The translation given by Umbreit seems best to agree with the connexion, but I am unable to see that the Hebrew would bear this. See, how-

quity: for this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.

ever, his Note on the passage. The word נִכְרַת he understands here in the sense of *going away*, or *bearing away*, and the phrase the "people under them," as denoting the *Shades* in the world beneath us. The whole expression then would be equivalent to a wish *to die*—with the expectation that there would be a change for the better, or a release from present sufferings. Elihu admonishes Job not to indulge such a wish, for it would be no gain for a man to die in the state of mind in which he then was.

21. *Take heed, regard not iniquity.* That is, be cautious that in the view which you take of the divine government, and the sentiments which you express, you do not become the advocate of iniquity. Elihu apprehended this from the remarks in which he had indulged, and regarded him as having become the advocate of the same sentiments which the wicked held, and as, in fact, manifesting the same spirit. It is well to put a man who is afflicted on his guard against this, when he attempts to reason about the divine administration. ¶ *For this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.* That is, you have chosen rather to give vent to the language of complaint, than to bear your trials with resignation. "You have chosen rather to accuse divine Providence than to submit patiently to his chastisements." *Patrick.* There was too much truth in this remark about Job; and it is still not an uncommon thing in times of trial, and indeed in human life in general. Men often prefer iniquity to affliction. They will commit crime rather than suffer the evils of poverty; they will be guilty of fraud and forgery to avoid apprehended want. They will be dishonest to their creditors rather than submit to the disgrace of bankruptcy. They will take advantage of the widow and the fatherless rather than suffer themselves. *Sin is often preferred to affliction*; and many are the men who, to avoid calamity, would not shrink from the commission of wrong.

22 Behold, God <sup>i</sup> exalteth by his power: who teacheth <sup>k</sup> like him?

23 Who hath enjoined him his

<sup>i</sup> Da. 4. 25, 32.

<sup>k</sup> Ps. 94. 12.

Especially in times of trial, when the hand of God is laid on men, they *prefer* a spirit of complaining and murmuring to patient and calm resignation to the will of God. They seek relief even in complaining; and think it *some* alleviation of their sufferings that they can *find fault with God*. "They who choose iniquity rather than affliction, make a very foolish choice; they that ease their cares by sinful pleasures, escape their troubles by sinful projects, and evade sufferings for righteousness' sake by sinful compliances against their consciences; these make a choice they will repent of, for there is more evil in the least sin than in the greatest affliction." Henry.

22. *Behold, God exalteth by his power.* The object of Elihu is now to direct the attention of Job to God, and to show him that he has evinced such power and wisdom in his works, that we ought not to presume to arraign him, but should bow with submission to his will. He remarks, therefore, that God *exalts*, or rather that God *is exalted*, or *exalts himself* (יִשְׁבֹּחַ) by his power. In the exhibition of his power, he thus shows that he is great, and that men ought to be submissive to him. In support of this, he appeals, in the remainder of his discourse, to the *works* of God, as furnishing extraordinary proofs of power, and full demonstration that God is exalted far above man. ¶ *Who teacheth like him?* The LXX render this, *δυναστος*—"Who is so powerful as he?" Rosenmüller and Umbreit render it *Lord*: "Who is Lord like him?" But the Hebrew word (מֶלֶךְ) properly means *one who instructs*, and the idea is, that there is no one who is qualified to give so exalted conceptions of the government of God as he is himself. The object is to direct the mind to him as he

way? or who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity?

24 Remember that thou magnify <sup>l</sup> his work, which men behold.

<sup>l</sup> Ps. 111. 2, 8.

is revealed in his works, in order to obtain elevated conceptions of his government.

23. *Who hath enjoined him his way?* Who has prescribed to him what he ought to do? Who is superior to him, and has marked out for him the plan which he ought to pursue? The idea is, that God is supreme and independent; no one has advised him, and no one has a right to counsel him. Perhaps, also, Elihu designs this as a reproof to Job for having complained so much of the government of God, and for being disposed, as he thought, to *prescribe* to God what he should do. ¶ *Who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity?* Thou hast done wrong. The object of Elihu is here to show that no one has a right to say this; no one could, in fact, say it. It was to be regarded as an indisputable point that God is always right, and that however dark his dealings with men may seem, the *reason* why they are mysterious *never is, that God is wrong*.

24. *Remember that thou magnify his work.* Make this a great and settled principle, to remember that God is *great* in all that he does. He is exalted far above us, and all his works are on a scale of vastness corresponding to his nature, and in all our attempts to judge of him and his doings, we should bear this in remembrance. He is not to be judged by the narrow views which we apply to the doings of men, but by the views which ought to be taken when we remember that he presides over the vast universe, and that as the universal Parent, he will consult the welfare of the whole. In judging of his doings, therefore, we are not to place ourselves in the centre, or to regard ourselves as the *whole* of the creation, but we are to remember that there are other great

25 Every man may see it; man may behold *it* afar off.

26 Behold, God is great, and we know *him* not; neither <sup>m</sup> can the number of his years be

<sup>m</sup> Ps. 102 24.

interests to be regarded, and that his plans will be in accordance with the welfare of the whole. One of the best rules for taking a proper estimate of God is that proposed here by Elihu—to remember that HE IS GREAT. ¶ *Which men behold.* The Vulgate renders this, *de quo cecinerunt viri*—“concerning which men sing.” The LXX, ὡν ἡρξαν ἄνδρες—“over which men rule.” Schultens accords with the Vulgate. So Coverdale renders it, “Whom all men love and praise.” So Herder and Noyes understand it, “Which men celebrate with songs.” This difference of interpretation arises from the ambiguity of the Hebrew word (רָאָה), some deriving it from רָאָה—*shūr*, to go round about, and then to survey, look upon, examine; and some from רָאָה—*shir*, to sing, to celebrate. The word will admit of either interpretation, and either will suit the connexion. The sense of *seeing* those works, however, better agrees with what is said in the following verse, and perhaps better suits the connexion. The object of Elihu is not to fix the attention on the fact that men *celebrate* the works of God, but to turn *the eyes to the visible creation*, as a proof of the greatness of the Almighty.

25. Every man may see it. That is, every man may look on the visible creation, and see proofs there of the wisdom and greatness of God. All may look on the sun, the moon, the stars; all may behold the tempest and the storm; all may see the lightning and the rain, and may form some conception of the majesty of the Most High. The idea of Elihu here is, that every man might trace the evidences that God is great in his works. ¶ *Man may behold it afar off.* His works are so great and glorious that they make an impression even at a vast distance. Though we are separated from them by a space

searched out.

27 For he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain <sup>n</sup> according to the vapour thereof,

<sup>n</sup> Ps. 147 8, 9.

which surpasses the power of computation, yet they are so great that they fill the mind with vast conceptions of the majesty and glory of their Maker. This is true of the heavenly bodies; and the more we learn of their immense distances from us, the more is the mind impressed with the greatness and glory of the visible creation.

26. Behold, God is great, and we know him not. That is, we cannot fully comprehend him. See Notes on ch. xi. 7—9. ¶ *Neither can the number of his years be searched out.* That is, he is eternal. The object of what is said here is to impress the mind with a sense of the greatness of God, and with the folly of attempting fully to comprehend the reason of what he does. Man is of a few days, and it is presumption in him to sit in judgment on the doings of one who is from eternity. We may here remark that the doctrine that there is an Eternal Being presiding over the universe, was a doctrine fully held by the speakers in this book—a doctrine far in advance of all that philosophy ever taught, and which was unknown for ages in the lands on which the light of revelation never shone.

27. For he maketh small the drops of water. Elihu now appeals, as he proposed to do, to the works of God, and begins with what appeared so remarkable and inexplicable, the wisdom of God in the rain and the dew, the tempest and the vapor. That which excited his wonder was, the fact in regard to the suspension of water in the clouds, and the distilling of it on the earth in the form of rain and dew. This very illustration had been used by Eliphaz for a similar purpose, (Notes, ch. v. 9, 10,) and whether we regard it as it appears to men without the light which science has thrown upon it, or look at the manner in which God suspends water in the clouds and sends it down

28 Which the clouds do drop  
and distil upon man abundantly.

29 Also, can any understand

the spreadings of the clouds, or the  
noise of his tabernacle?

in the form of rain and dew, with all the light which has been furnished by science, the fact is one that evinces in an eminent degree the wisdom of God. The word which is rendered "maketh small" (קטן) means, properly, *to scrape off, to detract, to diminish, to take away from*. In Piel, the form used here, it means, according to Gesenius, *to take to oneself, to attract*; and the sense here, according to this, is, that God attracts, or draws upwards the drops of water. So it is rendered by Herder, Noyes, Umbreit, and Rosenmüller. The idea is, that he *draws up* the drops of the water to the clouds, and then pours them down in rain. If the meaning in our common version be retained, the idea would be, that it was proof of great wisdom in God that the water descended in *small drops*, instead of coming down in a deluge. Comp. Notes on ch. xxvi. 8. ¶ *They pour down rain*. That is, the clouds pour down the rain. ¶ *According to the vapor thereof*—אֲדָמָתָא. The idea seems to be, that the water thus drawn up is poured down again in the form of a *vapory rain*, and which does not descend in torrents. The subject of admiration in the mind of Elihu was, that water should evaporate and ascend to the clouds, and be held there, and then descend again in the form of a gentle rain or fine mist. The reason for admiration is not lessened by becoming more fully acquainted with the laws by which it is done than Elihu can be supposed to have been.

28. *Upon man abundantly*. That is, upon many men. The clouds having received the ascending vapor, retain it, and pour it down copiously for the use of man. The arrangement, to the eye even of one who did not understand the scientific principles by which it is done, is beautiful and wonderful; the beauty and wonder are increased when the laws by which it is accomplished are understood. Elihu does not attempt to explain the *mode* by which this is done.

The *fact* was probably all that was then understood, and that was sufficient for his purpose. The LXX have given a translation of this verse which cannot be well accounted for, and which is certainly very unlike the original. It is, "But when the clouds cast a shade over the dumb creation, he impresseth a care on beasts, and they know the order for retiring to rest—κοιτης ταβιν. At all these things is not their understanding confounded? And is not thy heart starting from thy body?"

29. *Also, can any understand the spreadings of the clouds?* The outspreading—the manner in which they expand themselves over us. The idea is, that the manner in which the clouds seem to *spread out*, or unfold themselves on the sky, could not be explained, and was a striking proof of the wisdom and power of God. In the early periods of the world, it could not be expected that the causes of these phenomena would be known. Now that the causes are better known, however, they do not less indicate the wisdom and power of God, nor are these facts less fitted to excite our wonder. The simple and beautiful laws by which the clouds are suspended; by which they roll in the sky; by which they spread themselves out—as in a rising tempest, and by which they seem to unfold themselves over the heavens, should increase, rather than diminish, our conceptions of the wisdom and power of the Most High. ¶ *Or, the noise of his tabernacle*. Referring, doubtless, to thunder. The clouds are represented as a tent or pavilion spread out for the dwelling of God, (comp. Notes on Isa. xl. 22,) and the idea here is, that the noise made in a thunderstorm is in the peculiar dwelling of God. Herder well expresses it, "The fearful thunderings in his tent," Comp. Ps. xviii. 11:

"He made darkness his secret place,  
His pavilion round about him were dark waters  
and thick clouds of the skies."

The sense here is, Who can understand

30 Behold, he spreadeth <sup>o</sup> his light upon it, and covereth the <sup>1</sup> bottom of the sea.

31 For by them <sup>p</sup> judgeth he the people; he <sup>q</sup> giveth meat in

<sup>o</sup> Lu. 17. 24. <sup>1</sup> roots.  
<sup>p</sup> De. 8. 2, 15. <sup>q</sup> Ps. 136. 25. Acts 14. 17.

and explain the cause of thunder? The object of Elihu in this is, to show how great and incomprehensible is God, and nature furnishes few more impressive illustrations of this than the crash of thunder.

30. *Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it.* That is, upon his tabernacle or dwelling-place—the clouds. The allusion is to lightning, which flashes in a moment over the whole heavens. The image is exceedingly beautiful and graphic. The idea of *spreading out* the light in an instant over the whole of the darkened heavens, is that which Elihu had in his mind, and which impressed him so forcibly. On the difficulty in regard to the translation of the Septuagint here, see Schleusner on the word *ἡδω*. ¶ *And covereth the bottom of the sea.* Marg., *roots*. The word *roots* is used to denote the bottom, as being the lowest part of a thing—as the roots of a tree. The meaning is, that he covers the lowest part of the sea with floods of waters; and the object of Elihu is to give an exalted conception of the greatness of God, from the fact that his agency is seen in the highest and the lowest objects. He spreads out the clouds, thunders in his tabernacle, diffuses a brilliant light over the heavens, and at the same time is occupied in covering the bottom of the sea with the floods. He is Lord over all, and his agency is seen everywhere. The highest and the lowest objects are under his control, and his agency is seen above and below. On the one hand, he covers the thick and dense clouds with light; and on the other, he envelopes the depth of the ocean in impenetrable darkness.

31. *For by them judgeth he the people.* By means of the clouds, the rain, the dew, the tempest, and the thunderbolt. The idea seems to be, that he makes

abundance.

32 With clouds he covereth the light; and commandeth it *not* to shine, by the cloud that cometh betwixt.

use of all these to execute his purposes on mankind. He can either make them the means of imparting blessings, or of inflicting the severest judgments. He can cause the tornado to sweep over the earth; he can arm the forked lightning against the works of art; he can withhold rain and dew, and spread over a land the miseries of famine. ¶ *He giveth meat in abundance.* That is, by the clouds, the dew, the rain. The idea is, that he can send timely showers if he chooses, and the earth will be clothed with plenty. All these things are under his control, and he can, as he pleases, make them the means of comfort to man, or of punishing him for his sins. Comp. Ps. lxx. 11—13.

32. *With clouds he covereth the light.* The Hebrew here is, *וַיִּכְסֵּה*, “upon his hands.” Jerome, *In manibus abscondit lucem*, “he hideth the light in his hands.” Sept., *Ἐπὶ χειρῶν ἐκάλυψε φῶς*—“he covereth the light in his hands.” The allusion is, undoubtedly, to the lightning, and the image is, that God takes the lightning in his hands, and directs it as he pleases. There has been great variety, however, in the exposition of this verse and the following. Schultens enumerates no less than *twenty-eight* different interpretations, and almost every commentator has had his own view of the passage. It is quite evident that our translators did not understand it, and were not able to make out of it any tolerable sense. What idea they attached to the two verses (32, 33) it would be very difficult to imagine, for what is the meaning (ver. 33) of the phrase, “the cattle also concerning the vapor?” The general sense of the Hebrew appears to be, that God controls the rapid lightnings which appear so vivid, so quick, and so awful; and that he executes his own purposes with them, and makes



33 The noise <sup>r</sup> thereof sheweth<sup>r</sup> 1 KI. 18. 41, 45.

them, when he pleases, the instruments of inflicting punishment on his foes. The object of Elihu is to excite admiration of the greatness of God, who is *able* thus to control the lightning's flash, and to make it an obedient instrument in his hands. The particular expression before us, "By his hands he covereth the light," seems to mean that he seizes or holds the lightning in his hands (*Herder*), or that he covers over his hands *with* the lightning (*Umbreit*), and has it under his control. Prof. Lee supposes that it means, that he holds the lightning in the palms of his hands, or between his two hands, as a man holds a furious wild animal which he is about to let loose for the purpose of destroying. With this he compares the expression of Shakspeare, "Cry havoc, and let slip the dogs of war." There can be no doubt, I think, that the phrase means that God has the lightning under his control, that it is in his hands, and that he directs it as he pleases. According to Umbreit (Note) the allusion is to the *double use* which God makes of light, in one hand holding the lightning to destroy his foes, and in the other the light of the sun to bless his friends, as he makes use of the rain either for purposes of destruction or mercy. But this idea is not conveyed in the Hebrew. ¶ *And commandeth it not to shine.* The phrase "not to shine" is not in the Hebrew, and destroys the sense. The simple idea in the original is, "he commandeth it," that is, he has it under his control, directs it as he pleases, makes use even of the forked lightning as an instrument to execute his pleasure. ¶ *By the cloud that cometh betwixt.* The words "the cloud" are also inserted by our translators, and destroy the sense. There is no allusion to a cloud, and the idea that the light is intercepted by any object is not in the original. The Hebrew word (עננה) means, in occurring, in meeting, in striking upon, (from ענן—to strike upon, to impinge,

concerning it, the cattle also concerning <sup>1</sup> the vapour.

<sup>1</sup> that which goeth up.

to fall upon, to light upon), and the sense here would be well expressed by the phrase "*in striking*." The idea is exactly that which we have when we apply the word *strike* or *struck* to lightning, and the meaning is, that he gives the lightning commandment *in striking*, or when it strikes. Nothing could better answer the purpose of an illustration for Elihu in exciting elevated views of God, for there is no exhibition of his power more wonderful than that by which he controls the lightning.

33. *The noise thereof sheweth concerning it.* The word "noise" here has been inserted by our translators as a version of the Hebrew word (רום), and if the translators attached any idea to the language which they have used, it seems to have been that the noise attending the lightning, that is, the thunder, furnished an illustration of the power and majesty of God. But it is not possible to educe this idea from the original, and perhaps it is not possible to determine the sense of the passage. Herder renders it, "He pointeth out to them the wicked." Prof. Lee, "By it he announceth his will." Umbreit, "He makes known to it his friend;" that is, he points out his friend to the light so that it may serve for the happiness of that friend. Noyes, "He uttereth to him his voice; to the herds and the plants." Rosenmüller, "He announces what he has decreed against men, and the flocks which the earth has produced." Many other expositions have been proposed, and there is no reasonable ground of hope that an interpretation will be arrived at which will be free from all difficulty. The principal difficulty in this part of the verse arises from the word רום, rendered in our version, "The noise thereof." This may be from רום, and may mean a noise, or outcry, and so it is rendered here by Gesenius, "He makes known to him his thunder, i. e., to man, or to his enemies." Or the

word may mean *his friend*, as the word, *רֵץ* is often used. Job ii. 11, xix. 21; Prov. xxv. 17; Cant. v. 16; Hos. iii. 1. Or it may denote *will, thought, desire*. Ps. cxxxix. 2, 17. A choice must be made between these different meanings according to the view entertained of the scope of the passage. To me it seems that the word "*friend*" will better suit the connexion than any one of the other interpretations proposed. According to this, the idea is, that God points out *his friends* to the lightning which he holds in his hand, and bids it spare them. He has entire control of it, and can direct it where he pleases, and instead of sending it forth to work indiscriminate destruction, he carefully designates those on whom he wishes it to strike, but bids it spare his friends. ¶ *The cattle also concerning the vapor.* Marg., *that which goeth up*. What idea the translators attach to this phrase it is impossible now to know, and the probability is, that being conscious of utter inability to give any meaning to the passage, they endeavored to translate the *words* of the original as literally as possible. Coverdale evidently felt the same perplexity, for he renders it, "The rising up thereof sheweth he to his friends and to the cattle." Indeed, almost every translator and expositor has had the same difficulty, and each one has proposed a version of his own. An examination of the *words* employed is the only hope of arriving at any satisfactory view of the passage. The word rendered *cattle* (*קָדָה*), means, properly, (1.) expectation, hope, confidence. 1 Chron. xxix. 15; Ezra x. 2; (2.) a gathering together, a collection, as (*a*) of waters, Gen. i. 10; Ex. vii. 19, (*b*) a gathering together, a collection, or company of men, horses, &c.—a caravan. So it may possibly mean in 1 Kings x. 28, where interpreters have greatly differed. The word *cattle*, therefore, by no means expresses its usual signifi-

cation. That would be better expressed by *gathering, collecting, or assembling*. The word rendered *also* (*וְגַם*) denotes (1.) also, even, more, besides, &c., and (2.) *the nose*, and then *anger*—from the effect of anger in producing hard breathing. Prov. xxii. 24; Deut. xxxii. 22, xxix. 19. Here it may be rendered, without impropriety, *anger*, and then the phrase will mean, "the collecting, or gathering together of anger." The word rendered *vapor* (*אֶרֶץ*—if from *אָרַץ*) means that which *ascends*, and would then mean anything that *ascends*—as smoke, vapor; or, as Rosenmüller supposes, what *ascends*, or *grows* from the ground—that is, plants and vegetables. And so Umbreit, *das Gewächs*—"plants of any kind." Note. But with a slight variation in the pointing (*אֶרֶץ*—instead of *אָרַץ*), the word means *evil, wickedness, iniquity*—whence our word *evil*; Job xxiv. 20, vi. 29, xi. 14, xiii. 7; and it may, without impropriety, be regarded as having this signification here, as the points have no authority. The meaning of the whole phrase then will be, "the gathering, or collecting of his wrath is upon evil, i. e., upon the wicked;" and the sense is, that while, on the one hand, God, who holds the lightning in his hands, points out to it his friends, so that they are spared; on the other hand, the gathering together, or the condensation, of his wrath is upon the evil. That is, the lightnings—so vivid, so mighty, and apparently so wholly beyond law or control, are under his direction, and he makes them the means of executing his pleasure. His friends are spared; and the condensation of his wrath is on his foes. This exposition of the passage accords with the general scope of the remarks of Elihu, and this view of the manner in which God controls even the lightning, was one that was adapted to fill the mind with exalted conceptions of the majesty and power of the Most High.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

## ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

THIS chapter is a continuation of the argument commenced in the previous chapter to demonstrate the majesty and glory of God. The object is to show that his works are past finding out, and that, therefore, it becomes man to bow with submission under the dealings of his hand. See the analysis of ch. xxxvi. In the prosecution of this argument, Elihu refers to the following things as illustrating the majesty of God, and as showing how incomprehensibly wise he is. To the tempest, or thunder-storm, vs. 1—5; to the snow and rain, vs. 6—8; to the whirlwind, the cold, and to frost, vs. 9—13; to the phenomena of the clouds, vs. 14—16; to his own garments as imparting heat to the body, ver. 17; to the sky, spread out like a molten looking-glass, ver. 18; to the bright light on the clouds, and to the fair weather that comes out of the North, vs. 21, 22. In view of all this, he says that he was unable to speak of God in any adequate manner (vs. 19, 20); that we cannot hope to find him out, and that we ought to fear him, and to believe that he is wise and impartial in all his doings.

**A**T this also my heart trembleth, <sup>a</sup> and is moved out of his place.

<sup>a</sup> Da. 10. 7, 8. Mat. 28. 2—4. Ac. 16. 26—29.

2 Hear <sup>1</sup> attentively the noise of his voice, and the sound *that* goeth out of his mouth.

<sup>1</sup> hear in hearing.

1. *At this also.* That is, in view of the thunder-storm, for it is that which Elihu is describing. This description was commenced in ch. xxxvi. 29, and is continued to ver. 5 of this chapter, and should not have been separated by the division into chapters. Elihu sees a tempest rising. The clouds gather, the lightnings flash, the thunder rolls, and he is awed as with the conscious presence of God. There is nowhere to be found a more graphic and impressive description of a thunder-storm than this. Comp. Herder on Heb. Poetry, vol. i., 85, seq., by Marsh, Burlington, 1833. ¶ *My heart trembleth.* With fear. He refers to the palpitation or increased action of the heart produced by alarm. ¶ *And is moved out of his place.* That is, by violent palpitation. The heart seems to leave its calm resting-place, and to burst away by affright. The increased action of the heart under the effects of fear, as described here by Elihu, has been experienced by all. The *cause* of this increased action is supposed to be this—the immediate effect of fear is on the extremities of the nerves of the system, which are diffused over the whole body. The first effect is to prevent the circulation of the blood to the extremities, and to

drive it back to the heart, and thus to produce paleness. The blood thus driven back on the heart, produces an increased action there to propel it through the lungs and the arteries, thus causing at the same time the increased effort of the heart, and the rapid action of the lungs, and of course the quick breathing and the palpitation observed in fear. See Scheutzer, *Physica. Sacra*, in *loc.* An expression similar to that which occurs here, is used by Shakespeare, in *Macbeth*:

“Why do I yield to that suggestion,  
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,  
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,  
Against the use of nature.”

2. *Hear attentively.* Marg., as in Heb., *hear in hearing*; that is, hear with attention. It has been supposed by many, and not without probability, that the tempest was already seen rising, out of which God was to address Job (ch. xxxviii.), and that Elihu here calls the special attention of his hearers to the gathering storm, and to the low muttering thunder in the distance. ¶ *The noise of his voice.* Thunder is often represented as the voice of God, and this was one of the most natural of all suppositions when its nature was little understood, and is at all times a beauti-

3 He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his <sup>1</sup> lightning unto the <sup>2</sup> ends of the earth.

4 After it a voice <sup>b</sup> roareth: he thundereth <sup>c</sup> with the voice of his excellency; and he will

<sup>1</sup> light.

<sup>2</sup> wings.

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 68. 33.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. 29. 3.

ful poetic conception. See the whole of Ps. xxix. The word rendered "noise" (רָעַם) means, properly, *commotion*, that which is fitted to produce perturbation, or disquiet (see ch. iii. 17, 26; Isa. xiv. 3), and is here used to denote the commotion, or *raging* of thunder. ¶ *And the sound.* The word here used (רָעַם) means, properly, a *muttering*, *growling*—as of thunder. It is often used to denote sighing, moaning, and meditation, in contradistinction from clear enunciation. Here it refers to the thunder which seems to mutter or growl in the sky.

3. *He directeth it under the whole heaven.* It is under the control of God, and he directs it where he pleases. It is not confined to one spot, but seems to be murmuring from every part of the heavens. ¶ *And his lightning.* Marg., as in Heb., *light*. There can be no doubt that the lightning is intended. ¶ *Unto the ends of the earth.* Marg., as in Heb., *wings*. The word *wings* is given to the earth, from the idea of its being spread out or expanded like the wings of a bird. Comp. ch. xxxviii. 13; Ezek. vii. 2. The earth was spoken of as an expanse or plain that had corners or boundaries (Notes on Isa. xi. 12, xxiv. 16, xlii. 5), and the meaning here is, that God spread the lightning at pleasure over the whole of that vast expanse.

4. *After it a voice roareth.* After the lightning; that is, the flash is seen before the thunder is heard. This is apparent to all, the interval between the lightning and the hearing of the thunder depending on the distance. Lucretius, who has referred to the same fact, compares this with what occurs when a woodman is seen at a distance to wield an axe. The glance of the axe is seen

not stay them when his voice is heard.

5 God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doeth he, <sup>d</sup> which we cannot comprehend.

<sup>d</sup> Ec. 3. 11. Ro. 11. 33

long before the sound of the blow is heard:

"Sed tonitrum fit, uti post auribus accipiamus, Fulgere quam cernunt oculi, quia semper ad aures

Tardius adveniunt, quam visum, quæ moveant res.

Nunc etiam licet id cognoscere, cædere si quem

Ancipiti videas ferro proci arboris auctum, Ante fit, ut cernas ictum, quam plaga per aures

Det sonitum: Sic fulgorem quoque cernimus ante." LIB. vi.

¶ *He thundereth with the voice of his excellency.* That is, with a voice of majesty and grandeur. ¶ *And he will not stay them.* That is, he will not hold back the rain, hail, and other things which accompany the storm, when he begins to thunder. Rosenmüller. Or, according to others, he will not hold back and restrain the lightnings when the thunder commences. But the connexion seems rather to demand that we should understand it of the usual accompaniments of a storm—the wind, hail, rain, &c. Herder renders it, "We cannot explore his thunderings." Prof. Lee, "And none can trace them, though their voice be heard." According to him, the meaning is, that "great and terrific as this exhibition of God's power is, still the progress of these, his ministers, cannot be followed by the mortal eye." But the usual interpretation given to the Hebrew word is that of *holding back* or *retarding*, and this idea accords well with the connexion.

5. *God thundereth marvellously.* He thunders in a wonderful manner. The idea is, that the voice of his thunder is an amazing exhibition of his majesty and power. ¶ *Great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend.* That is, not only in regard to the thunder and the tempest, but in other things. The description of the storm properly ends

here, and in the subsequent verses Elihu proceeds to specify various other phenomena, which were wholly incomprehensible by man. The reference here to the storm, and to the other grand and incomprehensible phenomena of nature, is a most appropriate introduction to the manifestation of God himself as described in the next chapter, and could not but have done much to prepare Job and his friends for that sublime close of the controversy.

The passage before us (ch. xxxvi. 29—33; xxxvii. 1—5) is probably the earliest description of a thunder-storm on record. A tempest is a phenomenon which must early have attracted attention, and which we may expect to find described or alluded to in all early poetry. It may be interesting, therefore, to compare this description of a storm, in probably the oldest poem in the world, with what has been furnished by the masters of song in ancient and modern times, and we shall find that in sublimity and beauty the Hebrew poet will suffer nothing in comparison. In one respect, which constitutes the chief sublimity of the description, he surpasses them all; I mean in the recognition of God. In the Hebrew description, God is everywhere in the storm. He excites it; he holds the lightnings in both hands; he directs it where he pleases; he makes it the instrument of his pleasure, and of executing his purposes. Sublime, therefore, as is the description of the storm itself; furious as is the tempest; bright as is the lightning; and heavy and awful as is the roar of the thunder, yet the description derives its chief sublimity from the fact that God presides over all, riding on the tempest and directing the storm as he pleases. Other poets have rarely attempted to give this direction to the thoughts in their description of a tempest, if we may except Klopstock, and they fall, therefore, far below the sacred poet. The following is the description of a storm by Elihu, according to the exposition which I have given:

“Who can understand the outspreading of the clouds,  
And the fearful thunderings in his pavilion?  
Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it;  
He also covereth the depths of the sea.

By those he executeth judgment upon the people.

By these he giveth food also in abundance.  
With his hands he covereth the lightning,  
And commandeth it where to strike.  
He pointeth out to it his friends—  
The collecting of his wrath is upon the wicked.

At this also my heart palpitates,  
And is moved out of its place.  
Hear, O hear, the thunder of his voice!  
The muttering thunder that goes from his mouth!

He directeth it under the whole heaven,  
And his lightning to the ends of the earth.  
After it, the thunder roareth;  
He thundereth with the voice of his majesty.  
And he will not restrain the tempest when his voice is heard.  
God thundereth marvellously with his voice;  
He doeth wonders, which we cannot comprehend.”

The following is the description of a tempest by Æschylus, in the *Prometh. Desm.*, beginning,

—Χθὼν σπείλονται  
Βρονχία δ' ἡχώ παραμυκῆται  
Βροντῆς, κ.τ.λ.

—“I feel in very deed  
The firm earth rock: the thunder's deepening  
    roar  
Rolls with redoubled rage; the bickering  
    flames  
Flash thick; the eddying sands are whirled on  
    high;  
In dreadful opposition, the wild winds  
Rend the vex'd air: the boisterous billows rise,  
Confounding earth and sky: the impetuous  
    storm  
Rolls all its terrible fury.” POTTER.

Ovid's description is the following:

“Æthera conscendit, vultumque sequentia  
    traxit  
Nubila; queis nimbos, immistaque fulgura  
    ventis  
Addidit, et tonitrus, et inevitabile fulmen.”  
META. iii.

The description of a storm by Lucretius is the following:

“Præterea persæpe niger quoque per mare  
    nimbus  
Ut picis à cœlo demissum flumen, in undas  
Sic cadit, et fertur tenebris, procul et trahit  
    atram  
Fulminibus gravidam tempestatem, atque  
    procellis,  
Ignibus ac ventis cum primis ipse repletus:  
In terris quoque ut horrescant ac tecta requirant.  
Sic igitur supra nostrum caput esse putandum  
    est  
Tempestatem altam. Neque enim caligine  
    tanta  
Obruerau terras, nisi inædificata supernè  
Multa forent multis exempto nubilla sole.”  
LIB. vi.

6 For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; <sup>1</sup> likewise to

<sup>1</sup> and to the shower of rain, and to the showers of rain of his strength.

The well-known description of the storm by Virgil is as follows:

"Nimborum in patriam, loca foeta farentibus austris,  
Æolian venit. Hic vasto Rex Æolus antro  
Luctantes ventos, tempestatesque sonoras  
Imperio premit, ac vinclis et carcere frenat.  
Illi indignantes, magno cum murmure, montis  
Circum claustra fremunt. Celsa sedet Æolus arce,  
Sceptra tenens: mollitque animos, et temperat iras.  
— Vent, velut agmine facto,  
Quâ data porta, ruunt, et terras turbine perfiant.  
Incubuerunt mari, totumque à sedibus imis,  
Unâ Euræusque Notusque ruunt, creberque procellis  
Africus, et vastos volunt ad litora fluctus."  
ÆN. i. 51—57, 82—86.

One of the most sublime descriptions of a storm to be found anywhere is furnished by Klopstock. It contains a beautiful recognition of the presence and majesty of God, and a most tender and affecting description of the protection which his friends experience when the storm rushes by. It is in the *Frühlingsteier*—a poem which is regarded by many as his masterpiece. A small portion of it I will transcribe:

"Wolken strömen herauf!  
Sichtbar ist; der kommt, der Ewig!  
Nun schweben sie, rauschen sie, wirdeln die Winde!  
Wie beugt sich der Wald! Wie hebet sich der Strom!  
Sichtbar, wie du es Sterblichen seyn kannst, Ja, das bist du, sichtbar, Unendlicher!  
Zürnest du, Herr,  
Weil Nacht dein Gewand ist?  
Diese Nacht ist Segen der Erde.  
Vater, du zürnest nicht!  
Seht ihr den Zeugen des Nahen, den zukun- den Strahl?  
Hört ihr Jehovah's Donner?  
Hört ihr ihn? hört ihr ihn.  
Der erschütternden Donner des Herrn?  
Herr! Herr! Gott!  
Barmhertzig, und gnädig!  
Angebet, gepriesen,  
Sey dein herrlicher Name!  
Und die Gewitterwinde! Sie tragen den Donner!  
Wie sie rauschen! Wie sie mit lanter Woge den Wald durchströmen!  
Und nun schwiegen sie. Langsam wandelt Die schwarze Wolke.

the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength.

Seht ihr den neuen Zeugen das Nahen, den fliegenden Strahl?  
Hört ihr hoch in Wolke den Donner des Herrn?  
Er ruft: Jehova! Jehova!  
Und der geschmetterte Wald dampft!  
Aber nicht unsre Hütte!  
Unser Vater gebot  
Seinem Verderber,  
Vor unsrer Hütte vorüberzugehn!"

6. For he saith to the snow. That is, the snow is produced by the command of God, and is a proof of his wisdom and greatness. The idea is, that the formation of snow was an illustration of the wisdom of God, and should teach men to regard him with reverence. It is not to be supposed that the laws by which snow is formed in the atmosphere were understood in the time of Elihu. The fact that it seemed to be the effect of the immediate creation of God was the principal idea in the mind of Elihu in illustrating his wisdom. But it is not less fitted to excite our admiration of his wisdom now that the laws by which it is produced are better understood; and, in fact, the knowledge of those laws is adapted to elevate our conceptions of the wisdom and majesty of Him who formed them. The investigations and discoveries of science do not *diminish* the proofs of the Creator's wisdom and greatness, but every new discovery tends to change blind admiration to intelligent devotion; to transform wonder to praise. On the formation of snow, see Notes on ch. xxxviii. 22. ¶ *Be thou on the earth.* There is a strong resemblance between this passage and the sublime command in Gen. i. 3, "And God said, Let there be light, and there was light." Each of them is expressive of the creative power of God, and of the ease with which he accomplishes his purposes. ¶ *Likewise to the small rain.* Marg., and to the shower of rain, and to the showers of rain of his strength. The word which is here used in the Hebrew (שֶׁטַח) means rain, in general, and the phrase "small rain" (שֶׁטַח קָטָן) seems to be used to

7 He sealeth up the hand of every man, that <sup>c</sup> all men may know his work.

8 Then the beasts go <sup>f</sup> into

*c* Ps. 109. 27.

*f* Ps. 104. 22.

denote the rain simply, without reference to its violence, or to its being copious. The following phrase, "the great rain of his strength" (וְשֶׁמֶשׁ קִשְׁיָו), refers to the rain when it has increased to a copious shower. The idea before the mind of Elihu seems to have been that of a shower, as it commences and increases until it pours down torrents; and the meaning is, that alike in the one case and the other, the rain was under the command of God, and obeyed his will. The whole description here is that which pertains to winter, and Elihu refers doubtless to the copious rains which fell at that season of the year.

7. *He sealeth up the hand of every man.* That is, in the winter, when the snow is on the ground, when the streams are frozen, and when the labors of the husbandman cease. The idea of "sealing up the hand" is derived from the common purpose of a seal, to make fast, to close up, to secure (comp. Notes, ch. ix. 7, xxxiii. 16), and the sense is, that the hands can no more be used in ordinary toil. Every man in the snow and rain of winter is prevented from going abroad to his accustomed toil, and is, as it were, *sealed up* in his dwelling. The idea is exquisitely beautiful. God confines men and beasts in their houses or caves, until the winter has passed by. ¶ *That all men may know his work.* The LXX render this, "That every man may know his own weakness"—*ἀσθενεῖαν*. Various interpretations have been given of the passage, but our common version has probably expressed in the main the true sense, that God thus interrupts the labors of man, and confines him in his home, that he may feel his dependence on God, and may recognise the constant agency of his Creator. The Hebrew literally is, "For the knowledge of all the men of his making;" that is, that all the men whom he has created may have knowledge. The changing seasons

dens, and remain in their places.

9 Out of the <sup>1</sup> south cometh the whirlwind; and cold out of the <sup>2</sup> north.

<sup>1</sup> *chamber.*

<sup>2</sup> *scattering winds.*

thus keep before us the constant evidence of the unceasing agency of God in his works, and prevent the feeling which we might have, if everything was uniform, that the universe was under the control of *fate*. As it is, the succession of the seasons, the snow, the rain, the dew, and the sunshine, all bear marks of being under the control of an intelligent Being, and are so regulated that we need not forget that his unceasing agency is constantly round about us. It may be added, that when the farmer in the winter is laid aside from his usual toil, and confined to his dwelling, it is a favorable time for him to meditate on the works of God, and to acquaint himself with his Creator. The labors of man are thus interrupted; the busy affairs of life come to a pause, and while nature is silent around us, and the earth, wrapped in her fleecy mantle, forbids the labor of the husbandman, everything invites to the contemplation of the Creator, and of the works of his hands. The winter, therefore, might be improved by every farmer to enlarge his knowledge of God, and should be regarded as a season wisely appointed for him to cultivate his understanding and improve his heart.

8. *Then the beasts go into dens.* In the winter. This fact appears to have been early observed, that in the season of cold the wild animals withdrew into caves, and that many of them became torpid. This fact Elihu adverts to as an illustration of the wisdom and greatness of God. The proof of his superintending care was seen in the fact that they withdrew from the cold in which they would perish, and that provision is made for their continuance in life at a time when they cannot obtain the food by which they ordinarily subsist. In that torpid and inactive state, they need little food, and remain often for months with almost no nourishment.

9. *Out of the south.* Marg., *chamber,*

10 By the breath of God frost is given; and the breadth of  
 g Ps. 147, 18.

Jerome, *ab interioribus*—from the interior, or inner places. Sept., 'Εκ ταπεινών—from their chambers issue sorrows—ὀδύνας. The Hebrew word here used (רִמָּה) denotes, properly, an apartment, or chamber, especially an inner apartment, or a chamber in the interior of a house or tent. Gen. xliii. 30; Judg. xvi. 9, 12. Hence it means a bed-chamber, 2 Sam. iv. 7, or a female apartment or harem, Cant. i. 4; iii. 4. In ch. ix. 9, it is connected with the south—"the chambers of the south" (see Notes on that place), and means some remote, hidden regions in that quarter. There can be little doubt that the word "south" is here also to be understood, as it stands in contrast with a word which properly denotes the north. Still there may have been reference to a supposed opinion that whirlwinds had their origin in deep, hollow caves, and that they were owing to the winds which were supposed to be pent up there, and which raged tumultuously until they broke open the doors of their prison, and then poured forth with violence over the earth. Comp. the description of the storm in Virgil, as quoted above, in ver. 5. There are frequent allusions in the Scriptures to the fact that whirlwinds come from the south. See Notes on Isa. xxi. 1. Comp. Zech. ix. 14. Savary says of the south wind, which blows in Egypt from February to May, that it fills the atmosphere with a fine dust, rendering breathing difficult, and that it is filled with an injurious vapor. Sometimes it appears in the form of a furious whirlwind, which advances with great rapidity, and which is highly dangerous to those who traverse the desert. It drives before it clouds of burning sand; the horizon appears covered with a thick veil, and the sun appears red as blood. Occasionally whole caravans are buried by it in the sand. It is possible that there may be reference to such a whirlwind in the passage before us. Comp. Burder, in Rosenmüller's *Alte u. neue Morgenland*, No. 765. ¶ *The whirlwind.*

See Notes on ch. i. 19; xxx. 22. ¶ *And cold out of the north.* Marg., *scattering winds.* The Hebrew word here used (מִרְסָם) means, literally, *the scattering*, and is hence used for the north winds, says Gesenius, which scatter the clouds, and bring severe cold. Umbreit thinks the word is used to denote the north, because we seem to see the north winds strewed on the clouds. Probably the reference is to the north wind as scattering the snow or hail on the ground. Heated winds come from the south; but those which scatter the snow, and are the source of cold, come from the north. In all places north of the equator it is true that the winds from the northern quarter are the source of cold. The idea of Elihu is, that all these things are under the control of God, and that these various arrangements for heat and cold are striking proofs of his greatness.

10. *By the breath of God, frost is given.* Not by the violent north wind, or by the whirlwind of the south, but God seems to *breathe* in gentle manner, and the earth is covered with hoar frost. It appears in a still night, when there is no storm or tempest, and descends upon the earth as silently as if it were produced by mere breathing. Frost is congealed or frozen dew. On the formation and cause of dew, see Notes on ch. xxxviii. 28. The figure is poetical and beautiful. The slight motion of the air, even when the frost appears, seems to be caused by the *breathing* of God. ¶ *And the breadth of the waters is straitened.* That is, is contracted by the cold; or is frozen over. The waters are *compressed* into a solid mass (צָמַד), or are in a state of *pressure* or *compression*—for so the word here used means. What were before expanded rivers or arms of the sea, are now compressed into solid masses of ice. This, also, is proof of the greatness and power of God, for though the cause was not understood by Elihu, yet



11 Also by watering he wear-  
rieth the thick cloud; he scatter-  
eth <sup>1</sup> his bright cloud,

12 And it is turned round

<sup>1</sup> the cloud of his light.

there was no doubt that it was produced by his agency. Though the *laws* by which this occurs are now better understood than they were then, it is no less clearly seen that it is by his agency; and all the light which we obtain in regard to the laws by which these things occur, only serve to exalt our conceptions of the wisdom and greatness of God.

11. *Also by watering.* Very various interpretations have been given of this phrase. Herder renders it, "His brightness rendeth the clouds." Umbreit, Und Heiterkeit vertreibt die Wolke—"and serenity or clearness drives away the clouds." Prof. Lee, "For irrigation is the thick cloud stretched out." Rosenmüller, "Splendor dispels the clouds." Luther, "The thick clouds divide themselves that it may be clear." Coverdale, "The clouds do their labour in giving moistness." The Vulgate, "The grain desires the clouds;" and the LXX, "The cloud forms the chosen"—ἐκλεκτόν. This variety of interpretation arises from the uncertainty of the meaning of the original word—רָחַץ. According to the Chaldee and the Rab- bins, this word means *clearness, serenity* of the heavens, and then the whole clause is to be rendered, "serenity dis- pelleth the cloud." Or the word may be formed of the preposition בְּ *Beth*, and רִי *Ri*, meaning *watering* or *rain*, the same as רִי *Revi*. The word does not occur elsewhere in Hebrew, and hence it is not easy to determine its meaning. The weight of authority is in favour of *serenity, or clearness*—mean- ing that the thick, dark cloud is driven away by the *serenity or clearness of the atmosphere*—as where the clear sky seems to light up the heavens and to drive away the clouds. This idea seems, also, to be demanded by the parallelism, and is also more poetical than that in the common version. ¶ *Wearieth.* Or

about by his counsels; that they may do <sup>h</sup> whatsoever he com- mandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth.

¶ Ps. 148. 8.

removes, or scatters. The verb here used (רָחַץ) occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures, though *nouns* derived from the verb are found in Isa. i. 14, ren- dered *trouble*, and Deut. i. 12, rendered *cumbrance*. In Arabic it means to *cast down, to project*, and hence to lay upon as a burden. But the word may mean to impel, drive forward, and hence the idea that the dark thick cloud is pro- pelled or driven forward by the serenity of the sky. This *appears* to be so, and hence the poetic idea as it occurred to Elihu. ¶ *He scattereth his bright cloud.* Marg., *the cloud of his light.* The idea seems to be, that "his light," that is, the light which God causes to shine as the tempest passes off, seems to scatter or disperse the cloud. The image be- fore the mind of Elihu probably was that of a departing shower, when the light seems to rise behind it, and as it were to expel the cloud or to drive it away. We are not to suppose that this is philosophically correct, but Elihu re- presents it as it *appeared*, and the image is wholly poetical.

12. *And it is turned round about.* The word here rendered "*it*" (הִיא) may refer either to the *cloud*, and then it will mean that it is driven about at the plea- sure of God; or it may refer to God, and then it will mean that *he* drives it about at pleasure. The sense is not materially varied. The use of the Hebrew participle rendered "turned about" (in Hithpael), would rather imply that it refers to the cloud. The sense then is, that it turns *itself* round about—refer- ring to the appearance of a cloud in the sky that rolls itself about from one place to another. ¶ *By his counsels.* By the counsels or purposes of God. It is not by any agency or power of its own, but it is by laws such as he has ap- pointed, and so as to accomplish his will. The object is to keep up the idea that God presides over, and directs all these

13 He causeth it to come, whether <sup>1</sup> for correction, <sup>i</sup> or for his land, <sup>k</sup> or for mercy. <sup>1</sup>

14 Hearken unto this, O Job:

<sup>1</sup> a rod. <sup>i</sup> 1 Sa. 12. 18. Ez. 10. 9.  
<sup>k</sup> 1 Ki. 18. 45. <sup>l</sup> Joel 2. 23.

things. The word which is rendered *counsels* (תְּחִלָּה) means, properly, *a steering, guidance, management*, Prov. xi. 14. It is usually applied to the act of steering, as a vessel, and then to prudent management, wise counsel, skilful measures. It is rendered *wise counsels*, and *counsels*, Prov. i. 5, xi. 14, xii. 5, xxiv. 6, and *good advice*, Prov. xx. 18. It does not elsewhere occur in the Scriptures. The word is derived from תָּחַל — *hhēbēl*, a rope, or תָּחַל — *hhōbēl*, a sailor, pilot, and hence the idea of *steering*, or *directing*. The meaning is, that the movements of the clouds are entirely under the direction of God, as the vessel is of the pilot or helmsman. The LXX appear not to have understood the meaning of the word, and have not attempted to translate it. They retain it in their version, writing it, *ἡεβουλαδωσ*, showing, among other instances, how the Hebrew was pronounced by them. ¶ *That they may do whatsoever he commandeth them.* See Ps. cxlvii. 17, 18. The idea is, that even the *clouds*, which appear so capricious in their movements, are really under the direction of God, and are accomplishing his purposes. They do not move at haphazard, but they are under the control of one who intends to accomplish important purposes by them. Elihu had made this observation respecting the lightning (ch. xxxvi. 31—33), and he now says that the same thing was true of the clouds. The investigations of science have only served to confirm this, and to show that even the movements of the clouds are regulated by laws which have been ordained by a Being of infinite intelligence.

13. *He causeth it to come.* That is, the rain, or the storm. It is entirely under the hand of God, like the lightning (ch. xxxvi. 31), and designed to accomplish his purposes of mercy and of justice.

stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.

15 Dost thou know when God disposed them, and caused the light of his cloud to shine?

¶ *Whether for correction.* Marg., as in Heb., a rod. The rod is often used as an emblem of punishment. The idea is, that God, when he pleases, can send the rain upon the earth for the purpose of executing punishment. So he did on the old world (Gen. vii. 11, 12), and so the overflowing flood is often now sent to sweep away the works of man, to lay waste his fields, and to cut off the wicked. ¶ *Or for his land.* When necessary to render the land productive. He waters it by timely rains. It is called "*his land*," meaning that the earth belongs to the Lord, and that he cultivates it as his own. Ps. xxiv. 1. ¶ *Or for mercy.* In kindness and benignity to the world. But for this, the earth would become baked and parched, and all vegetation would expire. The idea is, that the rains are entirely under the control of God, and that he can make use of them to accomplish his various purposes—to execute his judgments, or to express his benignity and love. These various uses to which the lightning, the storm, and the rain could be made subservient under the divine direction, seem to have been one of the main ideas in the mind of Elihu, showing the supremacy and the majesty of God.

14. *Hearken unto this, O Job.* That is, to the lesson which such events are fitted to convey respecting God. ¶ *Stand still.* In a posture of reverence and attention. The object is to secure a calm contemplation of the works of God, so that the mind might be filled with suitable reverence for him.

15. *Dost thou know when God disposed them?* That is, the winds, the clouds, the cold, the snow, the sky, &c. The question refers to the manner in which God arranges and governs them, rather than to the time when it was done. So the Hebrew implies, and so the connexion demands. The ques-

16 Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous

works of him which is perfect in knowledge?

tion was not whether Job knew *when* all this was done, but whether he could explain *how* it was that God thus arranged and ordered the things referred to. Elihu asks him whether he could explain the manner in which the balancings of the clouds were preserved; in which the lightnings were directed; in which his garments were warm, and in which God had made and sustained the sky? The LXX render this, "We know that God hath disposed his works—that he hath made light out of darkness." ¶ *And caused the light of his cloud to shine.* That is, Canst thou explain the cause of lightning? Canst thou tell how it is that it seems to break out of a dark cloud? Where has it been concealed? And by what laws is it now brought forth? Elihu assumes that all this was done by the agency of God, and since, as he assumes to be true, it was impossible for men to explain the manner in which it was done. His object is to show that profound veneration should be shown for a God who works in this manner. Somewhat more is known now of the laws by which lightning is produced than there was in the time of Job; but the question may still be asked of man, and is as much fitted to produce awe and veneration as it was then, whether he understands the way in which God produces the bright lightning from the dark bosom of a cloud. Can he tell what is the exact agency of the Most High in it? Can he explain all the laws by which it is done?

16. *Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds?* That is, Dost thou know how the clouds are poised and suspended in the air? The difficulty to be explained was, that the clouds, so full of water, did not fall to the earth, but remained suspended in the atmosphere. They were poised and moved about by some unseen hand. Elihu asks what kept them there; what prevented their falling to the earth; what preserved the equilibrium, so that they did not all roll together? The phenomena of the

clouds would be among the first that would attract the attention of man, and in the early times of Job it is not to be supposed that the subject could be explained. Elihu assumes that they were held in the sky by the power of God, but what was the nature of his agency, he says, man could not understand, and hence he infers that God should be regarded with profound veneration. *We know more of the facts and laws respecting the clouds than was understood then, but our knowledge in this, as in all other things, is fitted only to exalt our conceptions of the Deity, and to change blind wonder into intelligent adoration. The causes of the suspension of the clouds are thus stated in the Edinburgh Encyclopedia, Art., Meteorology: "When different portions of the atmosphere are intermixed so as to produce a deposition of moisture" (comp. Notes on ch. xxxviii. 28), "the consequence will be the formation of a cloud. This cloud, from its increased specific gravity, will have a tendency to sink downwards; and were the lower strata of the air of the same temperature with the cloud, and saturated with moisture, it would continue to descend till it reached the surface of the earth—in the form of rain, or what is commonly called mist. In general, however, the cloud in its descent passes through a warmer region, when the condensed moisture again passes into a vapor, and consequently ascends till it reaches a temperature sufficiently low to recondense it, when it will begin again to sink. This oscillation will continue till the cloud settles at the point where the temperature and humidity are such as that the condensed moisture begins to be dissipated, and which is found on an average to be between two and three miles above the surface of the earth." By such laws the "balancing" of the clouds is secured, and thus is shown the wisdom of Him that is "perfect in knowledge." ¶ *The wondrous works of him that is perfect in knowledge.* Particularly in the matter under consideration.*

17 How thy garments are warm, when he quieteth the earth by the south wind?

He who can command the lightning, and hold the clouds suspended in the air, Elihu infers must be perfect in knowledge. To a Being who can do this, everything must be known. The reasoning of Elihu here is well-founded, and is not less forcible now than it was in the time of Job.

17. *How thy garments are warm.* What is the reason that the garments which we wear produce warmth? This, it would seem, was one of the philosophical questions which were asked at that time, and which it was difficult to explain. Perhaps it has never occurred to most persons to ask this apparently simple question, and if the inquiry were proposed to them, plain as it seems to be, they would find it as difficult to give an answer as Elihu supposed it would be for Job. Of the *fact* here referred to, that the garments became oppressive when a sultry wind came from the south, there could be no dispute. But what was the precise *difficulty* in explaining the fact is not so clear. Some suppose that Elihu asks this question sarcastically, as meaning that Job could not explain the simplest matters and the plainest facts; but there is every reason to think that the question was proposed with entire seriousness, and that it was supposed to involve real difficulty. It seems probable that the difficulty was not so much to explain why the garments should become oppressive in a burning or sultry atmosphere, as to show how the heated air itself was produced. It was difficult to explain why cold came out of the north (ver. 9); how the clouds were suspended, and the lightnings caused (vs. 11, 15, 16); and it was not less difficult to show what produced uncomfortable heat when the storms from the north were allayed; when the earth became quiet, and when the breezes blew from the south. This would be a fair question for investigation, and we may readily suppose that the causes then

18 Hast thou with him spread out the sky, which is strong, and as a molten looking-glass?

m Isa. 40. 22, 44. 24.

were not fully known. ¶ *When he quieteth the earth.* When the piercing blast from the north dies away, and the wind comes round to the south, producing a more gentle, but a sultry air. It was true not only that the whirlwind came from the south (ver. 9), but also that the heated, burning air came also from that quarter. Luke xii. 55. We know the reason to be that the equatorial regions are warmer than those at the north, and especially that in the regions where Job lived the air becomes heated by passing over extended plains of sand, but there is no reason to suppose that this was fully understood at the time referred to here.

18. *Hast thou with him spread out the sky?* That is, wert thou employed with God in performing that vast work, that thou canst explain how it was done? Elihu here speaks of the sky as it appears, and as it is often spoken of, as an *expanse* or solid body spread out over our heads, and as sustained by some cause which is unknown. Sometimes in the Scriptures it is spoken of as a curtain (Notes, Isa. xl. 22); sometimes as a "firmament," or a solid body spread out (Sept., Gen. i. 6, 7); sometimes as a fixture in which the stars are placed (Notes, Isa. xxxiv. 4); and sometimes as a scroll that may be rolled up, or as a garment, Ps. cii. 26. There is no reason to suppose that the true cause of the appearance of an expanse was understood at that time, but probably the prevailing impression was, that the sky was *solid*, and was a fixture in which the stars were held. Many of the ancients supposed that there were *concentric spheres*, which were transparent, but solid, and that these spheres revolved around the earth, carrying the heavenly bodies with them. In one of these spheres, they supposed, was the sun; in another the moon; in another the fixed stars; in another the planets; and it was the harmonious movement of these concentric and transparent orbs which

## JOB.

19 Teach us what we shall say unto him: *for* we cannot order *our speech* by reason of darkness. 20 Shall it be told him that I speak? If a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up.

it was supposed produced the "music of the spheres." ¶ Which is *strong*. Firm, compact. Elihu evidently supposed that it was *solid*. It was so firm that it was self-sustained. ¶ And as a *molten looking-glass*. As a mirror that is made by being fused or cast. The word "glass" is not in the original, the Hebrew denoting simply *seeing*, or a *mirror* (מראה). Mirrors were commonly made of plates of metal highly polished. See Notes on Isa. iii. 24. Comp. Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, vol. iii. p. 365. Ancient mirrors were so highly polished, that in some which have been discovered at Thebes, the lustre has been partially restored, though they have been buried for many centuries. There can be no doubt that the early apprehension in regard to the sky was, that it was a solid expanse, and that it is often so spoken of in the Bible. There is, however, no *direct declaration* that it is so, and whenever it is so spoken of, it is to be understood as *popular language*, as we speak still of the *rising* or *setting* of the sun, though we know that the language is not philosophically correct. The design of the Bible is not to teach science, but religion, and the speakers in the Bible were allowed to use the language of common life—just as scientific men, in fact, do now.

19. *Teach us what we shall say unto him*. This seems to be addressed to Job. It is the language of Elihu, implying that he was overawed with a sense of the majesty and glory of such a God. He knew not in what manner, or with what words to approach such a Being, and he asks Job to inform him, if he knew. ¶ *We cannot order our speech by reason of darkness*. Job had repeatedly professed a desire to bring his cause directly before God, and to argue it in his presence. He felt assured that if he could do that, he should be able so to present it as to obtain a decision in his favor. See Notes on ch.

xiii. 3, 18—22. Elihu now designs, indirectly, to censure that confidence. He says that he and his friends were so overawed by the majesty of God, and felt themselves so ignorant and so ill qualified to judge of him and his works, that they would not know what to say. They were in darkness. They could not understand even the works of his hands which were directly before them, and the most common operations of nature were inscrutable to them. How then could they presume to arraign God? How could they manage a cause before him with any hope of success? It is scarcely necessary to say, that the state of mind referred to here by Elihu is that which should be cultivated, and that the feelings which he expresses are those with which we should approach the Creator. We need some one to teach us. We are surrounded by mysteries which we cannot comprehend, and we should, therefore, approach our Maker with profound reverence and submission.

20. *Shall it be told him that I speak?* Still the language of profound awe and reverence, as if he would not have it even intimated to God that he had presumed to say *anything* in regard to him, or with a view to explain the reason of his doings. ¶ *If a man speak*. That is, if he attempt to speak with God; to argue a case with him; to contend with him in debate; to oppose him. Elihu had designed to reprove Job for the bold and presumptuous manner in which he had spoken of God, and for his wish to enter into a debate with him in order to vindicate his cause. He now says, that if any one should attempt this, God had power at once to destroy him; and that such an attempt would be perilous to his life. But other interpretations have been proposed, which may be seen in Rosenmüller, Umbreit, and Lee. ¶ *Surely he shall be swallowed up*. Destroyed for his presumption and rashness in thus contending with the

21 And now *men* see not the bright light which *is* in the clouds; but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them.

Almighty. Elihu says that on this account he would not dare to speak with God. He would fear that he would come forth in his anger, and destroy him. How much man by nature instinctively feels, when he has any just views of the majesty of God, that he needs a Mediator!

21. *And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds.* Either the lightning that plays on the clouds in an approaching tempest, or a glorious light spread over the sky on the approach of God. There is reason to believe that as Elihu delivered the sentiments recorded in the close of this chapter, he meant to describe God as if he were seen to be approaching, and that the symbols of his presence were discovered in the gathering tempest and storm. He is introduced in the following chapter with amazing sublimity and grandeur to speak to Job and his friends, and to close the argument. He comes in a whirlwind, and speaks in tones of vast sublimity. The tokens of his coming were now seen, and as Elihu discerned them, he was agitated, and his language became abrupt and confused. His language is just such as one would use when the mind was overawed with the approach of God—solemn, and full of reverence, but not connected, and much less calm than in his ordinary discourse. The close of this chapter, it seems to me, therefore, is to be regarded as spoken when the tempest was seen to be gathering, and when in awful majesty God was approaching, the lightnings playing around him, the clouds piled on clouds attending him, the thunder reverberating along the sky, and an unusual brightness evincing his approach. Notes, ver. 22. The idea here is, that men could not steadfastly behold that bright light. It was so dazzling and so overpowering, that they could not gaze on it intently. The coming of such a Being, arrayed in so much grandeur,

22 <sup>1</sup> Fair weather cometh out of the north: with God *is* terrible majesty.

<sup>1</sup> Gold.

and clothed in such a light, was fitted to overcome the human powers. ¶ *But the wind passeth, and cleanseth them.* The wind passes along and makes them clear. The idea seems to be, that the wind appeared to sweep along over the clouds as the tempest was rising, and they seemed to open or disperse in one part of the heavens, and to reveal in the opening a glory so bright and dazzling that the eye could not rest upon it. That light or splendour made in the opening cloud was the symbol of God, approaching to wind up this great controversy, and to address Job and his friends in the sublime language which is found in the closing chapters of the book. The word rendered *cleanseth* (קָדַר) means, properly, to shine, to be bright; and then to be pure or clean. Here the notion of shining or brightness is to be retained; and the idea is, that a wind appeared to pass along, removing the cloud which seemed to be a veil on the throne of God, and suffering the visible symbol of his majesty to be seen through the opening. See Notes on ch. xxvi. 9, "He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it."

22. *Fair weather.* Marg., gold. The Hebrew word (זָהָב) properly means *gold*, and is so rendered by the Vulgate, the Syriac, and by most versions. The LXX render it νέφη χρυσαυγούνα, "clouds shining like gold." The Chaldee, אֲרִיִּי, the north wind Boreas. Many expositors have endeavored to show that gold was found in the northern regions (see Schultens, *in loc.*); and it is not difficult so to establish that fact as to be a confirmation of what is here said, on the supposition that it refers literally to gold. But it is difficult to see why Elihu should here make a reference to the source where gold was found, or how such a reference should be connected with the description of the approaching tempest, and

23 *Touching the Almighty, we<sup>a</sup> cannot find him out: he is excellent in<sup>o</sup> power, and in judg-*

<sup>a</sup> 1 Ti. 6. 16.

<sup>o</sup> Ps. 62. 11; 66. 3.

the light which was already seen on the opening clouds. It seems probable to me that the idea is wholly different, and that Elihu means to say that a bright, dazzling light was seen in the northern sky *like burnished gold*, which was a fit symbol of the approaching Deity. This idea is hinted at in the Septuagint, but it has not seemed to occur to expositors. The image is that of the heavens darkened with the tempest, the lightnings playing, the thunder rolling, and *then* the wind seeming to brush away the clouds in the north, and disclosing in the opening a bright dazzling appearance like burnished gold, that bespoke the approach of God. The word is never used in the sense of *fair weather*. An ancient Greek tragedian, mentioned by Grotius, speaks of *golden air*—*χρυσωπὸς αἰθήρ*. Varro also uses a similar expression—*aurescit aër, the air becomes like gold*. So Thomson, in his Seasons:

"But yonder comes the powerful king of day  
Rejoicing in the east. The lessening cloud,  
The kindling azure, and the mountain's  
brow,

*Illumed with fluid gold, his near approach  
Betoken glad.*" SUMMER.

¶ *Out of the north.* That is, the symbol of the approaching Deity appears in that quarter, or God was seen to approach from the north. It may serve to explain this, to remark that among the ancients the northern regions were regarded as the residence of the gods, and that on the mountains in the north it was supposed they were accustomed to assemble. In proof of this, and for the reasons of it, see Notes on Isa. xiv. 13. From that region Elihu sees God now approaching, and directs the attention of his companions to the symbols of his advent. It is this which fills his mind with so much consternation, and which renders his discourse so broken and disconnected. Having, in a manner evincing great alarm, directed their attention to these symbols, he concludes what he has to say in

ment, <sup>p</sup> and in plenty of justice: <sup>q</sup> he will not afflict. <sup>r</sup>

<sup>p</sup> Ps. 99. 4.

<sup>q</sup> Isa. 45. 21.

<sup>r</sup> La. 3. 33.

a hurried manner, and God appears, to close the controversy. ¶ *With God is terrible majesty.* This is not a declaration asserting this of God in general, but as he then appeared. It is the language of one who was overwhelmed with his awful majesty, as the brightness of his presence was seen on the tempest.

23. *Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out.* See Notes, ch. xi. 7–9. This sentiment accords with all that Elihu had said, and, indeed, is what he designed particularly to enforce. But it has a peculiar emphasis here, where God is seen approaching in visible splendour, encompassed with clouds and tempests, and seated on a throne of burnished gold. *Such a God, Elihu says, it was impossible to comprehend. His majesty was overwhelming. The passage is much more impressive and solemn, and accords much better with the original, by omitting the words which our translators have introduced and printed in italics. It would then be,*

The Almighty!—We cannot find him out!  
Great in power, and in justice, and in righteousness!

Thus it expresses the overwhelming emotion, the awe, the alarm produced on the mind of one who saw God approaching in the sublimity of the storm. ¶ *He is excellent in power.* He excels, or is vast and incomprehensible in power. ¶ *And in judgment.* That is, in justice. ¶ *And in plenty of justice.* Heb., "in multitude of righteousness." The meaning is, that there was an overflowing fulness of righteousness; his character was entirely righteous, or that trait abounded in him. ¶ *He will not afflict.* Or, he will not oppress, he will not crush. It was true that he *did* afflict men, but the idea is, that there was not harshness or oppression in it. He would not do it for the mere sake of producing affliction, or when it was not deserved. Some MSS. vary the reading here so as to mean "he will not

24 Men do therefore <sup>s</sup> fear him: he respecteth not any *that* *are* wise <sup>t</sup> of heart.

<sup>s</sup> Mat. 10. 28.

<sup>t</sup> Mat. 11. 25. 1 Co. 1. 26.

answer;" that is, he will not give any account of what he does. The change has relation only to the points, but the above is the usual interpretation, and accords well with the connexion.

24. *Men do therefore fear him.* There is reason why they should fear him, or why they should treat him with reverence. ¶ *He respecteth not any that are wise of heart.* He pursues his own plans, and forms and executes his own counsels. He is not dependent on the suggestions of men, and does not listen to their advice. In his schemes he is original and independent, and men should therefore regard him with profound veneration. This is the sum of

all that Elihu had to say—that God was original and independent; that he did not ask counsel of men in his dealings; that he was great, and glorious, and inscrutable in his plans; and that men, therefore, should bow before him with profound submission and adoration. It was to be *presumed* that he was wise and good in all that he did, and to this independent and Almighty Sovereign man ought to submit his understanding and his heart. Having illustrated and enforced this sentiment, Elihu, overwhelmed with the awful symbols of the approaching Deity, is silent, and God is introduced to close the controversy.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

In the previous chapter, God is represented as approaching in a tempest. While the lightnings were playing, and the thunders rolling, a bright golden light is seen in the north, indicating the approach of the Most High. Elihu is overpowered with his majesty, and concludes his speech in a brief, hurried, and agitated manner. See Notes on ch. xxxvii. 21—24. Even while he is thus speaking, God appears, and addresses Job from the midst of the storm, and puts an end to this protracted controversy. He is introduced in circumstances of the highest sublimity, and at a time when all the speakers must have felt that his interposition was desirable. The friends of Job had not been able to maintain their position, and had been silenced. Job, though he had silenced them, had not been able to explain the facts which were constantly occurring, and which had constituted the basis of the argument of his friends. Both they and he had evinced, to a considerable extent, an improper spirit in what they had said, and it was appropriate that the divine views should be expressed in regard to their opinions and their temper. Elihu had interposed, and had professed his ability to explain everything which was dark in the debate. He had, however, advanced but one new thought, that calamity was designed to be disciplinary, and was not to be regarded as certain proof of the character of him who was afflicted. Beyond this he was unable to offer any explanation; and supposing that Job had not submitted as a good man should under afflictions, *he* had concluded also that Job lacked the proper spirit of piety, and joined with the friends of Job in the language of severe reproach. But in the great matters pertaining to the divine administration which had given so much perplexity, Elihu had no explanation to make, and all that he could say was, that God was so mighty that man *ought* to submit to him.

At this stage of the argument, the Almighty himself appears, and addresses Job from the midst of the tempest. He does not indeed appear, as Job had anticipated he would, to vindicate him at once. See Notes on ch. xix. 25, seq. His first object is to bring Job to a proper state of mind; to reprove the boldness and presumption with which he had spoken of the divine dealings; and to show him how utterly incompetent he was to judge of the ways of God. At the close of the scene, however, he expresses his approbation of the general spirit of Job in preference to that of his friends, and restores him to more than his former prosperity.

It is remarkable that in this discourse even God himself does not *explain* the difficulties which had so much embarrassed Job and his friends. He does not state why the wicked are so much prospered, or why the righteous suffer so much; he does not show how the sufferings of the good are consistent with his approbation of their conduct, nor does he refer to the retributions



of the future world. He does not say that the inequalities here will be adjusted there; that the wicked who are prospered here will be punished there; or that the righteous who suffer here will receive an ample compensation there. This, which we might have anticipated, and which would be the way in which *we* would now endeavor to meet the difficulties of the case, would have been far in advance of the state of knowledge then possessed in the world, and would have been anticipating the high and sublime revelations reserved for Christianity. It was not the purpose of God *then* to reveal the doctrine of the future state, and to communicate those sublime truths which now console us in our afflictions, and which, amidst the inequalities of the present state of trial, lead us to look forward to another world. Those truths were appropriately reserved for the brighter period in the history of the world, when the light of Christianity would arise. Truth has been communicated to mankind *gradually*, and however easy it would have been for God to have communicated the truths which we now have in the earliest stages of society, and however much suffering they might have alleviated, yet God chose to leave the subject of revelation as he did science, morality, the arts of life, and civil government, *to gradual and slow development*. Elementary truths were communicated at first, and by degrees those truths were enlarged until the perfect light arose.

In the conceptions of the nature of the divine government, therefore, among the patriarchs, we are not to look for the elevated views which we have under the gospel, and we are not to expect to find the same hopes and promises to cheer them in their afflictions which we enjoy. There was indeed enough truth revealed to preserve them from utter despondency, and to save the soul; but the system of divine truth was not fully disclosed to them. Accordingly, in this discourse of the Almighty, we do not meet with the same truths which we are permitted to contemplate under the Christian revelation. We are not directed to the same views of the designs of affliction, nor the same topics of consolation. We are not told of the future state, nor of the benefits which flow from trial there, nor of the consolations of the Holy Spirit, nor of the blessings of redemption. One great thought is held up to view, *that the sinner ought to be submission to that God who had shown himself to be so great and wise*. The appeal is made to his works; to the vastness of his wisdom; to the evidences of his power; to the fact that there was so much in his doings that was above the comprehension of man; and hence there is inferred the impropriety of arraigning him in regard to his moral government, or of sitting in judgment on his dealings. Profound submission to such a God is demanded, and men should acquiesce in the belief that he is right, even though the *reasons* of his doings are not disclosed. God is supreme, and should be adored; his wisdom is incomprehensible, and it is presumptuous to arraign it; his power is infinite, and man cannot resist it; and his providential care is universal, and man should trust him. The single lesson, therefore, which seems to be designed to be taught, is, **THAT WE ARE TO SUBMIT TO THE WILL OF GOD**. We are to do this, not because we see the reasons of his doings, and not because we are to be rewarded for it, and not because there is nothing dark in his dispensations, but because he is God, and has a right to do his pleasure.

In this chapter, the appeal is made to a great variety of subjects, to show how great and incomprehensible he is. God does not vindicate his own dealings, but he requires Job, who had spoken so confidently and rashly, to attempt to give an explanation of some of the works of nature which are constantly presented to view. The argument is, that if he was unable to explain those things which are before the eyes, it was presumption of the highest kind to complain of the secret counsels and purposes of the Almighty. If his natural government could not be comprehended or explained in regard to the phenomena which are constantly occurring, how much less could man hope to understand the principles of his moral administration. In illustrating and enforcing this, God appeals to the following things:—To the creation of the earth, vs. 4–7; to the sea, and the wisdom evinced in fixing its bounds, vs. 8–11; to the formation of light, and the manner in which it is distributed over the earth, vs. 12–15; to the supplies of water for the ocean, ver. 16; to the deep caverns of the region of death, ver. 17; to the extent of the earth, ver. 18; to the sources of light and of darkness, vs. 19–21; to the formation of snow and hail, vs. 22, 23; to the lightning, the storm, and the showers of rain, vs. 24–28; to the formation of ice, vs. 29, 30; to the rising and setting of the stars, and their influence over the world, vs. 31–35; to the wisdom which he has given to man, ver. 36; to the clouds, vs. 37, 38; to the instincts of animals, and the laws by which they are governed, vs. 39–41.

**T**HEN the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

1. *Then the LORD answered Job.* This speech is addressed particularly to Job, not only because he is the principal personage referred to in the book, but particularly because he had indulged in language of murmuring and complaint. God designed to bring him to a proper state of mind before he appeared openly

for his vindication. It is the purpose of God, in his dealings with his people, to bring them to a proper state of mind before he appears as their vindicator and friend, and hence their trials are often prolonged, and when he appears, he seems at first to come only to rebuke them. Job had indulged in very im-

2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words <sup>a</sup> without knowledge?

a c. 34. 35; 35. 16.

proper feelings, and it was needful that those feelings should be subdued before God would manifest himself as his friend, and address him in words of consolation. ¶ *Out of the whirlwind.* The tempest; the storm—probably that which Elihu had seen approaching, ch. xxxvii. 21—24. God is often represented as speaking to men in this manner. He spake amidst lightnings and tempests on Mount Sinai, (Ex. xix. 16—18,) and he is frequently represented as appearing amidst the thunders and lightnings of a tempest, as a symbol of his majesty. Comp. Ps. xviii. 9—13; Hab. iii. 3—6. The word here rendered *whirlwind* means rather *a storm, a tempest*. The LXX render this verse, “After Elihu had ceased speaking, the Lord spake to Job from a tempest and clouds.”

2. *Who is this.* Referring, doubtless, to Job, for he is specified in the previous verse. Some have understood it of Elihu, (see Schultens,) but the connexion evidently demands that it should be understood as referring to Job. The object was, to reprove him for the presumptuous manner in which he had spoken of God and of his government. It was important before God manifested his approval of Job, that he should declare his sense of what he had said, and show him how improper it was to indulge in language such as he had used. ¶ *That darkeneth counsel.* That makes the subject darker. Instead of explaining the reason of the divine dealings, and vindicating God from the objections alleged against him and his government, the only tendency of what he had said had been to make his government appear dark, and severe, and unjust in the view of his friends. It might have been expected of Job, being a friend of God, that all that he said would have tended to inspire confidence in him, and to explain and vindicate the divine dealings; but God had seen much that was the very reverse.

3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and <sup>1</sup> answer thou me.

<sup>1</sup> make me known.

Even the true friends of God, in the dark times of trial, may say much that will tend to make men doubt the wisdom and goodness of his government, and to prejudice the minds of the wicked against him. ¶ *By words without knowledge.* Words that did not contain a true explanation of the difficulty. They conveyed no light about his dealings; they did not tend to satisfy the mind, or to make the subject more clear than it was before. There is much of this kind of speaking in the world; much that is written, and much that falls from the lips in debate, in preaching, and in conversation, that explains nothing, and that even leaves the subject more perplexed than it was before. We see from this verse that God does not, and cannot, approve of such “words.” If his friends speak, they should vindicate his government; they should at least express their conviction that he is *right*; they should aim to explain his doings, and to show to the world that they are reasonable. If they cannot do this, they should adore in silence. The Saviour never spoke of God in such a way as to leave any doubt that his ways could be vindicated, never so as to leave the impression that he was harsh or severe in his administration, or so as to lend the least countenance to a spirit of murmuring and complaining.

3. *Gird up now thy loins like a man.* To gird up the loins is a phrase which has allusion to the mode of dress in ancient times. The loose flowing robe which was commonly worn, was fastened with a girdle when men ran, or labored, or engaged in conflict. See Notes on Matth. v. 38—41. The idea here is, “Make thyself as strong and vigorous as possible; be prepared to put forth the highest effort.” God was about to put him to a task which would require all his ability—that of explaining the facts which were constantly occurring in the universe. The whole passage is ironical. Job had under-

4 Where<sup>b</sup> wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou<sup>1</sup> hast understanding.

5 Who hath laid the measures

<sup>b</sup> Pr. 8. 22, 30.

<sup>1</sup> knowest.

taken to tell what he knew of the divine administration, and God now calls upon him to show his claims to the office of such an expositor. So wise a man as he was, who could pronounce on the hidden counsels of the Most High with much confidence, could assuredly explain those things which pertained to the visible creation. The phrase, "like a man," means boldly, courageously. Comp. Notes, 1 Cor. xvi. 13. ¶ *I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.* Marg., as in Heb., *make me known*. The meaning is, "I will submit some questions or subjects of inquiry to you for solution. Since you have spoken with so much confidence of my government, I will propose some inquiries as a test of your knowledge."

4. *Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?* The first appeal is to the creation. The question here, "Where wast thou?" implies that Job was not present. He had not then an existence. He could not, therefore, have aided God, or counselled him, or understood what he was doing. How presumptuous, therefore, it was in one who presumed to sit in judgment on the doings of him who had formed the world! How little could he expect to be able to know of him! The expression, "laid the foundations of the earth," is taken from building an edifice. The foundations are first laid, and the superstructure is then reared. It is a poetic image, and is not designed to give any intimation about the actual process by which the earth was made, or the manner in which it is sustained. ¶ *If thou hast understanding*, Marg., as in Heb., *if thou knowest*. That is, "Declare how it was done. Explain the manner in which the earth was formed and fixed in its place, and by which the beautiful world grew up under the hand of God." If Job could not do this,

thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

6 Whereupon are the<sup>2</sup> foundations thereof<sup>3</sup> fastened? or who laid the corner-stone thereof,

<sup>2</sup> sockets.

<sup>3</sup> made to sink.

what presumption was it to speak as he had done of the divine administration!

5. *Who hath laid the measures thereof.* That is, as an architect applies his measures when he rears a house. ¶ *If thou knowest*. Or rather, "for thou knowest." The expression is wholly ironical, and is designed to rebuke Job's pretensions of being able to explain the divine administration. ¶ *Or who hath stretched the line upon it*. As a carpenter uses a line to mark out his work. See Notes on Isa. xxviii. 17. The earth is represented as a building, the plan of which was laid out beforehand, and which was then made according to the sketch of the architect. It is not, therefore, the work of chance or fate. It is laid out and constructed according to a wise plan, and in a method evincing infinite skill.

6. *Whereupon are the foundations.* Marg., *sockets*. The Hebrew word (סֻכָּה) means a basis, as of a column, or a pedestal; and then also the foundation of a building. The language here is evidently figurative, comparing the earth with an edifice. In building a house, the securing of a proper foundation is essential to its stability; and here God represents himself as rearing the earth on the most permanent and solid basis. The word is not used in the sense of *sockets*, as it is in the margin. ¶ *Fastened*. Marg., *made to sink*. The margin rather expresses the sense of the Hebrew word שָׁקַע. It is rendered *sink* and *sunk* in Ps. lxi. 2, 14, ix. 15; Lam. ii. 9; Jer. xxxviii. 6, 22, drowned in Ex. xv. 4; and *were settled* in Prov. viii. 25. The word does not elsewhere occur in the Scriptures, and the prevailing sense is that of *sinking*, or *settling down*, and hence *to impress*—as a seal settles down into

7 When the morning-stars <sup>c</sup><sup>c</sup> Rev. 2. 28.

wax. The reference here is to a foundation-stone that sinks or settles down into clay or mire until it becomes solid. ¶ *Or who laid the corner-stone thereof.* Still an allusion to a building. The corner-stone sustains the principal weight of an edifice, as the weight of two walls is concentrated on it, and hence it is of such importance that it should be solid and firmly fixed. The question proposed for the solution of Job is, On what the earth is founded? On this question a great variety of opinions was entertained by the ancients, and of course no correct solution could be given of the difficulty. It was not known that it was suspended and held in its place by the laws of gravitation. The meaning here is, that if Job could not solve this inquiry, he ought not to presume to sit in judgment on the government of God, and to suppose that he was qualified to judge of his secret counsels.

7. *When the morning-stars.* There can be little doubt that angelic beings are intended here, though some have thought that the *stars* literally are referred to, and that they seemed to unite in a chorus of praise when another world was added to their number. The Vulgate renders it, *astra matutina, morning-stars*; the LXX, "ὅτε ἐγενήθησαν ἄστροα—when the stars were made"; the Chaldee, "the stars of the zephyr," or morning—בֹּקֶר בְּרָקִי. The comparison of a prince, a monarch, or an angel with a *star* is not uncommon. Comp. Notes on Isa. xiv. 12. The expression, "the *morning-stars*," is used on account of the beauty of the principal star which, at certain seasons of the year, leads on the morning. It is applied naturally to those angelic beings that are of distinguished glory and rank in heaven. That it refers to the angels, seems to be evident from the connexion; and this interpretation is demanded in order to correspond with the phrase, "sons of God," in the other member of the verse. ¶ *Sang together.*

sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

United in a grand chorus or concert of praise. It was usual to celebrate the laying of a corner-stone, or the completion of an edifice, by rejoicing. See Zech. iv. 7; Ezra iii. 10. ¶ *And all the sons of God.* Angels—called the sons of God from their resemblance to him, or their being created by him. ¶ *Shouted for joy.* That is, they joined in praise for so glorious a work as the creation of a new world. They saw that it was an event which was fitted to honor God. It was a new manifestation of his goodness and power; it was an enlargement of his empire; it was an exhibition of benevolence that claimed their gratitude. The expression in this verse is one of uncommon, perhaps of unequalled beauty. The time referred to is at the close of the creation of the earth, for the whole account relates to the formation of this world, and not of the stars. At that period, it is clear that other worlds had been made, and that there were holy beings then in existence who were of such a rank as appropriately to be called "morning-stars" and "sons of God." It is a fair inference, therefore, that the *whole* of the universe was not made at once, and that the earth is one of the last of the worlds which have been called into being. No one can demonstrate that the work of creation may not now be going on in some remote part of the universe, nor that God may not yet form many more worlds to be the monuments of his wisdom and goodness, and to give occasion for augmented praise. Who can tell but that this process may be carried on for ever, and that new worlds and systems may continue to start into being, and there be continually new displays of the inexhaustible goodness and wisdom of the creator? When this world was made, there was occasion for songs of praise among the angels. It was a beautiful world. All was pure, and lovely, and holy. Man was made like his God, and everything was full of love. Surveying the beautiful

8 Or *who* shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, *as if* it had issued out of the womb?

9 When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick dark-

scene, as the world arose under the plastic hand of the Almighty—its hills, and vales, and trees, and flowers, and animals, there was occasion for songs and rejoicings in heaven. Could the angels have foreseen, as perhaps they did, what was to occur here, there was also occasion for songs of praise, such as would exist in the creation of no other world. This was to be the world of redeeming love; this the world where the Son of God was to become incarnate and die for sinners; this the world where an immense host was to be redeemed to praise God in a song unknown to the angels—the song of redemption, in the sweet notes which shall ascend from the lips of those who shall have been ransomed from death by the great work of the atonement.

8. Or who shut up the sea with doors.

This refers also to the act of the creation, and to the fact that God fixed limits to the raging of the ocean. The word "doors" is used here rather to denote *gates*, such as are made to shut up water in a dam. The Hebrew word properly refers, in the dual form which is used here (שַׁעַרַיִם), to *double doors*, or to folding doors, and is also applied to the gates of a city, Deut. iii. 5; 1 Sam. xxiii. 7; Isa. xlv. 1. The idea is, that the floods were bursting forth from the abyss or the centre of the earth, and were checked by placing gates or doors which restrained them. Whether this is designed to be a poetic or a real description of what took place at the creation, it is not easy to determine. Nothing forbids the idea that something like this may have occurred when the waters in the earth were pouring forth tumultuously, and when they were restrained by obstructions placed there by the hand of God, as if he had made *gates* through which they could pass only when he should open them. This supposition also would accord well with

ness a swaddling-band for it,

10 And <sup>1</sup> brake up for it my decreed *place*, and set bars and doors,

<sup>1</sup> established my decree upon it.

the account of the flood in Gen. vii. 11, where it is said that "the fountains of the great deep were broken up," as if those flood-gates had been opened, or the obstructions which God had placed there had been suffered to be broken through, and the waters of their own accord flowed over the world. We know as yet too little of the interior of the earth to ascertain whether this is to be understood as a literal description of what actually occurred. ¶ When it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb. All the images here are taken from child-birth. The ocean is represented as being born, and then as invested with clouds and darkness as its covering and its swaddling-bands. The image is a bold one, and I do not know that it is anywhere else applied to the formation of the ocean.

9. When I made the cloud the garment thereof. Referring to the garment in which the new-born infant is wrapped up. This image is one of great beauty. It is that of the vast ocean just coming into being, with a cloud resting upon it and covering it. Thick darkness envelopes it, and it is swathed in mists. Comp. Gen. i. 2, "And darkness was upon the face of the deep." The time here referred to is that before the light of the sun arose upon the earth, before the dry land appeared, and before animals and men had been formed. Then the new-born ocean lay carefully enveloped in clouds and darkness under the guardian care of God. The dark night rested upon it, and the mists hovered over it.

10. And brake up for it my decreed place. Marg., *established my decree upon it*. So Herder, "I fixed my decrees upon it." Luther renders it, "Da ich ihm den Lauf brach mit meinem Damm"—"then I broke its course with my barrier." Umbreit renders it, "I measured out to it my limits;" that is, the

11 And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall<sup>1</sup> thy proud waves be stayed?<sup>d</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *the pride of thy waves.* d Ps. 89. 9.

limits or bounds which I judged to be proper. So the Vulgate, *Circumdedi illud terminis meis*—"I surrounded it with my limits," or with such limits as I chose to affix. The LXX render it, "I placed boundaries to it." Coverdale, "I gave it my commandment." This is undoubtedly the sense which the connexion demands; and the idea in the common version, that God had broken up his fixed plans in order to accommodate the new-born ocean, is not in accordance with the parallelism. The Hebrew word (שָׁבַר) indeed commonly means to break, to break in pieces. But, according to Gesenius, and as the place here demands, it may have the sense of measuring off, defining, appointing, "from the idea of breaking into portions;" and then the sense will be, "I measured for it [the sea] my appointed bound." This meaning of the word is, however, more probably derived from the

Arabic, where the word شَبَر, *shabar*, means to measure with the span (*Castel*), and hence the idea here of measuring out the limits of the ocean. The sense is, that God measured out or determined the limits of the sea. The idea of breaking up a limit or boundary which had been before fixed, it is believed, is not in the text. The word rendered "my decreed place" (מִקְוֵה) refers commonly to a law, statute, or ordinance, meaning originally anything that was engraved (פָּתַח), and then, because laws were engraved on tablets of brass or stone, any statute or decree. Hence it means anything prescribed or appointed, and hence a bound or limit. See Notes on ch. xxvi. 10; comp. Prov. viii. 29, "When he gave to the sea his decree (פָּתַח) that the waters should not pass his commandment." The idea in the passage before us is, that God fixed the limits of the ocean by his own purpose or pleasure. ¶ And set bars. Doors

12 Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the day-spring to know his place;

were formerly fastened, as they are often now, by cross-bars; and the idea here is, that God had enclosed the ocean, and so fastened the doors whence it would issue out, that it could not pass.

11. *And said, Hitherto shalt thou come.* This is a most sublime expression, and its full force can be felt only by one who has stood on the shores of the ocean, and seen its mighty waves roll towards the beach as if in their pride they would sweep everything away, and how they are checked by the barrier which God has made. A voice seems to say to them that they may roll in their pride and grandeur so far, but no farther. No increase of their force or numbers can sweep the barrier away, or make any impression on the limits which God has fixed. ¶ *And here shall thy proud waves be stayed.* Marg., as in Heb., *the pride of thy waves.* A beautiful image. The waves seem to advance in pride and self-confidence, as if nothing could stay them. They come as if exulting in the assurance that they will sweep everything away. In a moment they are arrested and broken, and they spread out humbly and harmlessly on the beach. God fixes the limit which they are not to pass, and they lie prostrate at his feet.

12. *Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days.* That is, in thy lifetime hast thou ordered the light of the morning to shine, and directed its beams over the world? God appeals to this as one of the proofs of his majesty and power—and who can look upon the spreading light of the morning and be insensible to the force and beauty of the appeal? The transition from the ocean to the morning may have been partly because the light of the morning is one of the striking exhibitions of the power of God, and partly because, in the creation of the world, the light of the sun was made to dawn soon after the

13 That it might take hold of the ends<sup>1</sup> of the earth, that the

<sup>1</sup> wings.

gathering together of the waters into seas. See Gen. i. 10, 14. The phrase "since thy days," implies that the laws determining the rising of the sun were fixed long before the time of Job. It is asked whether this had been done since he had an existence, and whether he had an agency in effecting it—implying that it was an ancient and established ordinance long before he was born. ¶ *Caused the day-spring to know his place.* The "day-spring" (צֶדֶד) means the aurora, the dawn, the morning. The mention of its "place" here seems to be an allusion to the fact that it does not always occupy the same position. At one season of the year it appears on the equator, at another north, and at another south of it, and is constantly varying its position. Yet it always knows its place. It never fails to appear where, by the long-observed laws, it ought to appear. It is regular in its motions, and is evidently under the control of an intelligent Being, who has fixed the laws of its appearing.

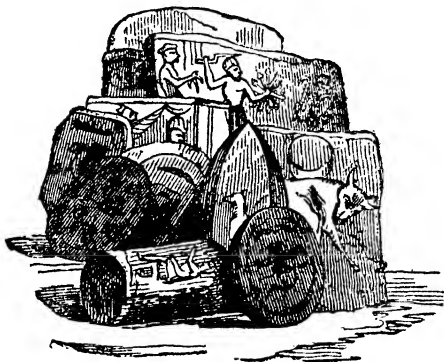
13. *That it might take hold of the ends of the earth.* Marg., as in Heb., *wings*. Wings are in the Scriptures frequently given to the earth, because it seems to be spread out, and the expression refers to its *extremities*. The language is derived from the supposition that the earth was a plain, and had limits or bounds. The idea here is, that God causes the light of the morning suddenly to spread to the remotest parts of the world, and to reveal everything which was there. ¶ *That the wicked might be shaken out of it.* Out of the earth; that is, by the light which suddenly shines upon them. The sense is, that the wicked perform their deeds in the darkness of the night, and that in the morning light they flee away. The effect of the light coming upon them is to dis-

wicked might be shaken out of it?

14 It is turned as clay to the seal; and they stand as a garment.

turb their plans, to fill them with alarm, and to cause them to flee. The idea is highly poetic. The wicked are engaged in various acts of iniquity under cover of the night. Robbers, thieves, and adulterers go forth to their deeds of darkness as though no one saw them. The light of the morning steals suddenly upon them, and they flee before it under the apprehension of being detected. "The dawn," says Herder, "is represented as a watchman, a messenger of the Prince of Heaven, sent to chase away the bands of robbers." It may illustrate this to observe, that it is still the custom of the Arabs to go on plundering excursions before the dawn. When on their way, this faithful watchman, the aurora, goes out to spread light about them, to intimidate them, and to disperse them. Comp. Notes on ch. xxiv. 13—17.

14. *It is turned as clay to the seal.* A great variety of interpretations has been given to this passage. Schultens enumerates no less than *twenty*, and of course it is not easy to determine the meaning. The LXX render it, "Didst thou take clay of the earth, and form an animal, and place on the earth a creature endowed with speech?" Though this would agree well with the connexion, yet it is a wide departure from the Hebrew. The reference is, undoubtedly, to some effect or impression produced upon the earth by the light of the morning, which bears a resemblance, in some respects, to the impression produced on clay by a seal. Probably the idea is, that the spreading light serves to render visible and prominent the forms of things, as the seal when impressed on clay produces certain figures. The following engraving, representing ancient seals, may enable us the better to understand the passage:



a, Babylonian, b b, Egyptian Seals, c c, wax impressions from them.

In this engraving it will be seen that one form of the seal (the Babylonian, a) was an engraved cylinder, fixed on an axle, with a handle, in the manner of a garden roller, which produced the impression *by being rolled on the softened wax*. Mr. Rich (Second Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon, p. 59) remarks, "The Babylonian cylinders are among the most interesting and remarkable of the antiques. They are from one to three inches in length; some are of stone, and others apparently of paste or composition of various kinds. Sculptures from several of these cylinders have been published in different works. Some of them have cuneiform writing," (or the "arrow-headed" character,

p. 48,) "but it has the remarkable peculiarity that it is reversed, or written from right to left, every other kind of cuneiform writing being incontestably to be read from left to right. This can only be accounted for by supposing that they were intended to *roll off impressions*. The cylinders are said to be chiefly found in the ruins of Jabouiga. The people of this country are fond of using them as amulets, and the Persian pilgrims who come to the shrines of Ali and Hossein frequently carry back with them some of these curiosities." The following engraving will furnish an idea of the impression produced by one of the cylinder-seals in the possession of Mr. Rich.





15 And from the wicked their arm <sup>c</sup> shall be broken.  
light is withholden, and the high

<sup>c</sup> Ps. 10. 15.

It may be observed, also, in the explanation of the passage, that clay was often used for the purpose of a seal in Oriental countries. The manner in which it was used was to daub a mass of it over the door or lock of a house, a caravansera, a room, or any place where anything valuable was deposited, and to impress upon it a rude seal. This indeed would not make the goods safe from a robber, but it would be an indication that the place is not to be entered, and show that if it had been entered, it was by violence. Comp. Matth. xxvii. 66. This impression on clay would be produced by the "revolving" or Babylonian seal, by *turning it about, or rolling it on clay*, and thus bringing the figures out prominently, and this will explain the passage here. The passing of the light over the earth in the morning seems to be like rolling a cylinder-seal on soft clay. It leaves distinct impressions; raises up prominent figures; gives form and beauty to what seemed before a dark, undistinguished mass. The word rendered "it is turned" (פָּתַח) means, properly, "it turns itself"—and the idea is that, like the revolving seal, it seems to roll over the face of the earth, and to leave a distinct and beautiful impression. Before, the face of the earth was obscure. Nothing, in the darkness of the night, could be distinguished. Now, when the dawn arises and the light spreads abroad, the figures of hills, and trees, and tents, and cities rise before it as if a seal had been rolled on yielding clay. The image is one, therefore, of high poetic character, and of great beauty. If this be the correct interpretation, the passage does not refer to the revolution of the earth on its axis, or to any change in appearance or form which it assumes when the wicked are shaken out of it, as Schultens supposes, but to the beautiful change in appearance which the face of the earth seems to undergo when the aurora passes over it. ¶ And they stand as a garment. This passage is perhaps even more difficult than the

former part of the verse. Prof. Lee renders it, "And that men be set up as if accoutred for battle," and according to him the idea is, that men, when the light shines, set themselves up for the prosecution of their designs. Coverdale renders it, "Their tokens and weapons hast thou turned like clay, and set them up again as the changing of a garment." Grotius supposes it means that things by the aurora change their appearance and color like a variegated garment. The true idea of the passage is probably that adopted by Schultens, Herder, Umbreit, Rosenmüller, and Noyes, that it refers to the beautiful appearance which the face of nature seems to put on when the morning light shines upon the world. Before, all was dark and undistinguished. Nature seemed to be one vast blank, with no prominent objects, and with no variety of color. When the light dawns on the earth, the various objects—the hills, trees, houses, fields, flowers, seem to stand forth, or to raise themselves up (פָּתַח), and to put on the appearance of gorgeous and variegated vestments. It is as if the earth were clothed with beauty, and what was before a vast blank were now arrayed in splendid vestments. Thus understood, there is no need of supposing that garments were ever made, as has been sometimes supposed, with so much inwrought silver and gold that they would stand upright themselves. It is a beautiful conception of poetry—that the spreading light seems to clothe the dark world with a gorgeous robe, by calling forth the objects of creation from the dull and dark uniformity of night to the distinctness of day.

15. And from the wicked their light is withholden. While the light thus spreads over the earth, rendering every object beautiful and blessing the righteous, light and prosperity are withheld from the wicked. See Notes on ch. xxiv. 17. Or, the meaning may be, that when the light shines upon the world, the wicked, accustomed to per-

16 Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the deep?

form their deeds in the night, flee from it, and retreat to their dark hiding-places. ¶ *And the high arm.* Of the wicked. The arm is a symbol of strength. It is that by which we accomplish our purposes, and the idea here is, that the haughty power of the oppressor shall be crushed. The *connexion* here seems to be this. In vs. 12—14, there is a beautiful description of the *light*, and of its effects upon the appearance of natural objects. It was such as to clothe the world with beauty, and to fill the heart of the pious with gladness. In order now to show the greatness of the punishment of the wicked, it is added that all this beauty will be hidden from them. They will be driven away by the light into their dark hiding-places, and will be met there with the withdrawal of all the tokens of prosperity, and their power will be crushed.

16. *Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?* The word here rendered *springs* (קִנּוֹת) occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures. It is rendered by the Vulgate *profunda*, the deep parts; and by the LXX πηγῶν—*fountains*. The reference seems to be, to the deep fountains at the bottom of the sea, which were supposed to supply it with water. A large portion of the water of the ocean is indeed conveyed to it by rivers and streams that run on the surface of the earth. But it is known, also, that there are fountains at the bottom of the ocean, and in some places the amount of water that flows from them is so great, that its action is perceptible at the surface. One such fountain exists in the Atlantic Ocean near the coast of Florida. ¶ *Or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?* Or, rather, in the deep places or caverns of the ocean. The word rendered “*search*” here (חָקַר) means *searching, investigation*, and then an object that is to be searched out, and

17 Have the gates<sup>f</sup> of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?

f Ps. 9. 13.

hence that which is obscure, remote, hidden. Then it may be applied to the deep caverns of the ocean, or the bottom of the sea. This is to man unsearchable. No line has been found long enough to fathom the ocean, and of course what is there is unknown. It is adduced, therefore, with great propriety, as a proof of the wisdom of God, that he could look on the deep caverns of the ocean, and was able to search out all that was there. A sentiment similar to this occurs in Homer, when speaking of Atlas:

“Ὅστε θαλάσσης  
Πάσης βένθεα οἶδεν.

ODYS. l. 5.

“Who knows the depths of every sea.”

17. *Have the gates of death been opened unto thee?* That is, the gates of the world where death reigns; or the gates that lead to the abodes of the dead. The allusion here is to *Sheol*, or *Hades*, the dark abodes of the dead. This was supposed to be beneath the ground, and was entered by the grave, and was enclosed by gates and bars. See Notes on ch. x. 21, 22. The transition from the reference to the bottom of the sea to the regions of the dead was natural, and the mind is carried forward to a subject farther beyond the ken of mortals than even the unfathomable depths of the ocean. The idea is, that God saw all that occurred in that dark world beneath us, where the dead were congregated, and that his vast superiority to man was evinced by his being able thus to penetrate into, and survey those hidden regions. It is common in the classic writers to represent those regions as entered by *gates*. Thus Lucretius, l. 1105,

—“Hæc rebus erit pars janua leti,  
Hæc se turba foras dabit omnis materai.”

—“The doors of death are open,  
And the vast whole unbounded ruinwhelms.”  
Good.

18 Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? declare, if thou knowest it all.

19 Where is the way *where* light dwelleth? and *as for* dark-

ness, where is the place thereof,

20 That thou shouldest take it<sup>1</sup> to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof?

<sup>1</sup> or, at.

So Virgil, *Æn.* ii. 661,

—"Patet isti janua leto."

"The door of death stands open."

¶ Or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death? The doors which lead down to the gloomy realms where death spreads its dismal shades. This expression is more emphatic than the former, for the word *tzalmaveth*, "shadow of death," is more intensive in its meaning than the word *maveth*, "death." There is the superadded idea of a deep and dismal shadow; of profound and gloomy darkness. See the word explained in the Notes on ch. iii. 5, comp. ch. x. 21, 22. Man was unable to penetrate these gloomy abodes and to reveal what was there; but God saw all with the clearness of noonday.

18. *Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth?* How far the earth extends. To see the force of this, we must remember that the early conception of the earth was, that it was a vast plain, and that in the time of Job its limits were unknown. One of the earliest and most obvious inquiries would naturally be, What was the extent of the earth? By what was it bounded? And what was the character of the regions beyond those which were then known? All this was hidden from man at that time, and God, therefore, asks with emphasis, whether Job had been able to determine this great inquiry? The knowledge of this is put on the same foundation as that of the depths of the sea, and of the dark regions of the dead, and in the time of Job the one was as much unknown as the other. God, who knew all this, must, therefore, be infinitely exalted above man.

19. *Where is the way where light dwelleth?* Or, rather, where is the way or path to the place where light dwells? Light is conceived of as coming from a

great distance, and as having a place which might be regarded as its home. It comes in the morning, and is withdrawn at evening, and it *seems* as if it came from some far-distant dwelling-place in the morning to illuminate the world, and then retired to its home in the evening, and thus gave place for darkness to visit the earth. The idea is this, "Dost thou know, when the light withdraws from the world, to what place it betakes itself as its home? Canst thou follow it to its distant abodes, and tell where they are? And when the shadows of night come forth and take its place, canst thou tell whence they come; and when they withdraw again in the morning, canst thou follow them, and tell where they are congregated together to abide? The thought is highly poetic, and is not to be taken literally. The meaning is, that God only could know what was the great fountain of light, and where that was; and the question substantially may be asked of man with as much force and propriety now as in the time of Job. Who knows what is the great fountain of light to the universe? Who knows what light is? Who can explain the causes of its rapid flight from world to world? Who can tell what supplies it, and prevents it from being exhausted? Who but God, after all the discoveries of science, can fully understand this? ¶ And as for darkness, where is the place thereof? Darkness here is personified. It is represented as having a place of abode; as coming forth to take the place of light when that is withdrawn, and again as retiring to its dwelling when the light re-appears.

20. *That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof.* Marg., "or, at." The sense seems to be this: God asks Job whether he was so well acquainted with the sources of light, and the place where

21 Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born? or *because* the number of thy days is great?

it dwelt, that he could take it under his guidance and *re-conduct* it to its place of abode. ¶ *And that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof?* The same idea is repeated here. Light has a home; a place of abode. It was far distant—in some region unknown to man. Did Job know the way in which it came, and the place where it dwelt, so well that he could conduct it back again to its own dwelling? Umbreit, Noyes, and Herder suppose that this is to be understood ironically,

"For thou hast reached its boundaries!  
For thou knowest the path to its dwelling!"

But it has been commonly regarded as a question, and thus understood, it accords better with the connexion.

21. *Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born?* This may either be a question, or it may be spoken ironically. According to the former mode of rendering it, it is the same as asking Job whether he had lived long enough to understand where the abode of light was, or whether he had an existence when it was created, and knew where its home was appointed. According to the latter mode, it is keen sarcasm. "Thou must know all this, for thou art so old. Thou hast had an opportunity of observing all this, for thou hast lived through all these changes, and observed all the works of God." This latter method of interpreting it is adopted by Umbreit, Herder, Noyes, Rosenmüller, and Wemyss. The former, however, seems much better to accord with the connexion, and with the dignity and character of the speaker. It is not desirable to represent God as speaking in the language of irony and sarcasm, unless the rules of interpretation imperatively demand it.

22. *Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?* Snow is here represented as something which is *laid up* like treasure, and kept in reserve for use when God shall require it. Silver

and gold were thus laid up for occasions when they would be wanted, and the figurative sentiment here is, that snow and hail were thus preserved for the use to which the Almighty might devote them, or for those great occasions when it would be proper to bring them forth to execute his purposes. Of course, it was to be expected that God would speak in the language which men commonly used when speaking of his works, and would not go into a philosophical or scientific explanation of the phenomena of nature. His object was not to teach science, but to produce a solemn impression of his greatness, and *that* is secured by such an appeal, whether the laws of nature are understood or not. The simple appeal to Job here is, whether he could explain the phenomena of snow and hail? Could he tell how they were formed? Whence they came? Where they were preserved, and how they were sent forth to execute the purposes of God? The idea is, that all that pertained to the snow was distinctly understood by God, and that these were facts which Job did not know of, and which he could not explain. The effect of time, and of scientific investigation, in this as in other cases to which reference is made in this book, has been only to increase the force of this question. The effect of the discoveries which are made in the works of God is not to diminish our sense of his wisdom and majesty, but to change mere wonder to praise; to transform blind amazement to intelligent adoration. Every new discovery of a law of nature is fitted more to impress the mind with awe, and at the same time it becomes the basis of a new act of intelligent confidence in God. This is true of snow as of other things. In the time and country of Job it came doubtless from the north. Vast quantities seemed to be poured forth from those regions at certain seasons of the year, as if it were reserved there in vast

store-houses, or treasuries. Science has, however, told us that it is congealed vapor, formed in the air by the vapor being frozen there before it is collected into drops large enough to form hail. In the descent of the vapor to the earth it is frozen, and descends in the numerous variety of crystallized forms in which the flakes appear. Perhaps there is nothing more fitted to excite pleasing conceptions of the wisdom of God—not even the variety of beauty in flowers—than the various forms of crystals in

which snow appears. Those crystals present an almost endless variety of forms. Descartes and Dr. Hook were among the first whose minds seem to have been drawn to the figures of the crystals in snow, and since their investigations, the subject has excited great interest in others. Captain Scoresby, who gave much attention to this subject and to other arctic phenomena, has given a delineation of ninety-six of these crystals, a portion of which will be found in the annexed engraving:



## 23 Which I have reserved

g Ex. 9. 18, 24. Jos. 10. 11. Is. 30. 30. Rev. 16. 21.

He adds, "The extreme beauty and the endless variety of the microscopic objects perceived in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, are, perhaps, fully equalled, if not surpassed, in both particulars of beauty and variety, by the crystals of snow. The principal configurations are the stelliform and the hexagonal; though almost every variety of shape of which the generating angles of  $60^{\circ}$  and  $120^{\circ}$  are susceptible, may, in the course of a few years' observation, be discovered. Some of the general varieties in the figures of the crystals may be referred to the temperature of the air; but the particular and endless modifications of the same classes of crystals can only be referred to the will and pleasure of the First Great Cause, whose works, even the most minute and evanescent, and in regions the most remote from human observation, are altogether admirable." See the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, Art., Snow. ¶ *Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail.* As if the hail were reserved in store-houses, like the weapons of war, to be called forth when God should please, in order to execute his purposes. Hail—so well known in its nature and form—consists of masses of ice or frozen vapor, falling from the clouds in showers or storms. These masses consist of little spherules, united, but not all of the same consistence; some being as hard and solid as perfect ice, others soft like frozen snow. Hailstones assume various figures; some are round, others angular, others pyramidal, others flat, and sometimes they are stellated, with six radii, like crystals of snow. *Ency., as quoted in Webster's Dic.* Snow and hail are formed in the clouds when they are at an elevation where the temperature is below  $32^{\circ}$ . The particles of moisture become congealed and fall to the earth. When the temperature below the clouds is more than  $32^{\circ}$ , the flakes of snow often melt, and descend in the form of rain. But hailstones, from their greater solidity and more rapid descent, often reach the earth even when the temperature is much higher; and hence we have

against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?

storms of hail in the summer. The difference in the formation of snow and hail is, that in the former case the vapor in the clouds is congealed before it is collected into drops; in the case of hail, the vapor is collected into drops or masses, and then frozen. "If we examine," says Mr. Leslie, "the structure of a hailstone, we shall perceive a snowy kernel encased by a harder crust. It has very nearly the appearance of a drop of water suddenly frozen, the particles of air being driven from the surface towards the centre, where they form a spongy texture. This circumstance suggests the probable origin of hail, which is, perhaps, occasioned by rain falling through a dry and very cold stratum of air." *Edin. Ency.*, Art., *Meteorology*. All the facts about the formation of hail were unknown in the time of Job, and hence God appeals to them as evidence of his superior wisdom and greatness, and in proof of the duty of man to submit to him. These phenomena, which were constantly occurring, man could not explain; and how much less qualified, therefore, was he to sit in judgment on the secret counsels of the Almighty! The same observation may be made now, for though science has done something to explain the laws by which snow and hail are formed, yet those discoveries have tended to enlarge our conceptions of the wisdom of God, and have shown us, to an extent which was not then suspected, how much is still unknown. We see a few of the laws by which God does these things, but who is prepared to explain these laws themselves, or to tell why and how the particles of vapor arrange themselves into such beautiful crystallized forms?

23. Which I have reserved. As if they were carefully treasured up, to be brought forth as they shall be needed. The idea is, that they were entirely under the direction of God ¶ *The time of trouble.* Herder, "the time of need." The meaning probably is, that he had kept them in reserve for the time when he wished to bring

24 By what way is the light parted, *which* scattereth the east wind upon the earth?

25 Who hath divided a water-

course for the overflowing of waters; or a way for the lightning of thunder;

calamity on his enemies, or that he made use of them to punish his foes. Comp. Notes on ch. xxxvi. 31—33. ¶ *Against the day of battle and war.* Hailstones were employed by God sometimes to overwhelm his foes, and were sent against them in time of battle. See Josh. x. 11; Ex. ix. 22—26; Ps. xviii. 13, 14. Comp. Notes on Isa. xxix. 6.

24. *By what way is the light parted?*

The reference here is to the light of the morning, that seems to come from one point, and to spread itself at once over the whole earth. It seems to be collected in the east, or, as it were, *condensed*, or *concentrated* there, and then to *divide itself*, and to expand over the face of the world. God here asks Job whether he could explain this, or show in what manner it was done. This was one of the subjects which might be supposed early to excite inquiry, and is one which can be as little explained now as then. The causes of the propagation of light, which seems to proceed from a centre, and to spread rapidly in every direction, are, perhaps, as little known now as they were in the time of Job. Philosophy has done little to explain this, and the *mode* in which light is made to travel in eight minutes from the sun to the earth—a distance of ninety millions of miles—and the manner in which it is “divided” or “parted” from that great centre, and spread over the solar system, is as much of a real mystery as it was in the days of Job, and the question proposed here may be asked now with as much emphasis as it was then. ¶ *Which scattereth the east wind upon the earth.* According to this translation, the idea would be, that somehow light is the cause of the east wind. But it may be doubted whether this is the true interpretation, and whether it is meant to be affirmed that light has any agency in causing the wind to blow. Herder renders it,

“When doth the light divide itself,  
When the east wind streweth it upon the earth?”

According to this, the idea would be, that the light of the morning seemed to be borne along by the wind. Umbreit renders it, “Where is the way upon which the east wind flows forth upon the earth?” That is, the east wind, like the light, comes from a certain point, and seems to spread abroad over the world; and the question is, whether Job could explain this? This interpretation is adopted by Rosenmüller and Noyes, and seems to be demanded by the parallelism, and by the nature of the case. The cause of the rapid spreading of the wind from a certain point of the compass was involved in as much obscurity as the propagation of the light, nor is that cause much better understood now. There is no reason to suppose that the spread of the light has any particular agency in causing the east wind, as our common version seems to suppose, nor is that idea necessarily in the Hebrew text. The *east* wind is mentioned here either because the *light* comes from the east, and the wind from that quarter was more naturally suggested than any other, or because the east wind was remarkable for its violence. The idea that a strong east wind was somehow connected with the dawn of day or the rising of the sun, was one that prevailed, at least to some extent, among the ancients. Thus Catullus (lxiv. 270, seq.) says:

“Hic qualis flatu placidum mare matutino  
Horrificans zephyrus proclivas incitat undas  
Aurora exoriente, vagi sub lumine solis.”

25. *Who hath divided a water-course for the overflowing of waters.* That is, for the waters that flow down from the clouds. The idea seems to be this: that the waters of heaven, instead of pouring down in floods, or all coming down together, seemed to flow in certain

26 To cause it to rain <sup>a</sup> on the earth, *where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man;*

27 To satisfy <sup>i</sup> the desolate and

<sup>a</sup> Ps. 147. 8. Je. 14. 22.

<sup>i</sup> Ps. 107. 35.

canals formed for them; as if they had been cut out through the clouds for that purpose. The causes of rain, the manner in which water was suspended in the clouds, and the reasons why the rain did not come down altogether in floods, early attracted attention, and gave occasion to investigation. The subject is more than once referred to in this book. See Notes on ch. xxvi. 8. ¶ *Or a way for the lightning of thunder. For the thunder-flash.* The idea is this: a path seems to be opened in the dark cloud for the passage of the flash of lightning. How such a path was made, by what agency or by what laws, was the question proposed for inquiry. The lightning seemed at once to burst through the dark cloud where there was no opening and no sign of a path before, and pursue its zig-zag journey as if all obstructions were removed, and it passed over a beaten path. The question is, Who could have traced out this path for the thunder-flash to go in? Who could do it but the Almighty? And still, with all the light that science has cast on the subject, we may repeat the question.

26. *To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is.* This is designed to heighten the conception of the power of God. It could not be pretended that this was done by man, for the rain was caused to fall in the desolate regions where no one dwelt. In the lonely desert, in the wastes remote from the dwellings of men, the rain is sent down, evidently by the providential care of God, and far beyond the reach of the agency of man. There is very great beauty in this whole description of God as superintending the falling rain far away from the abodes of men, and in those lonely wastes pouring down the waters, that the tender herb may spring

*waste ground; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?*

28 Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew?

up, and the flowers bloom under his hand. All this may seem to be *wasted*, but it is not so in the eye of God. Not a drop of rain falls in the sandy desert or on the barren rock, however useless it may seem to be, that is not seen to be of value by God, and that is not designed to accomplish some important purpose there.

27. *To satisfy the desolate and waste ground.* As if he lifted an imploring voice to God, and he sent down the rain to satisfy it. The desert is thus like a thirsty pilgrim. It is parched, and thirsty, and sad, and it appeals to God, and he meets its wants, and satisfies it. ¶ *And to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth.* In the desert. There God works alone. No man is there to cultivate the extended wilds, and yet an unseen agency is going forward. The grass springs up; the bud opens; the leaf expands; the flowers breathe forth their fragrance as if they were under the most careful cultivation. All this must be the work of God, since it cannot even be pretended that *man* is there to produce these effects. Perhaps one would be more deeply impressed with a sense of the presence of God in the pathless desert, or on the boundless prairie, where no man is, than in the most splendid park, or the most tastefully cultivated garden which man could make. In the one case, the hand of God alone is seen; in the other, we are constantly admiring the skill of man.

28. *Hath the rain a father?* That is, it is produced by God and not by man. No one among men can claim that he causes it, or can regard it as his offspring. The idea is, that the production of rain is among the proofs of the wisdom and agency of God, and that it is caused in a way that demonstrates his



own agency. It is not by any power of man; and it is not in such a way as to constitute a relation like that between a father and a son. The rain is often appealed to in this book as something whose cause man could not explain, and as demonstrating the wisdom and supremacy of God. Among philosophic and contemplative minds it would early excite inquiry, and give occasion for wonder. What caused it? Whence came the water which fell? How was it suspended? How was it borne from place to place? How was it made to descend in drops, and why was it not poured down at once in floods? Questions like these would early excite inquiry, and we are not to suppose that in the time of Job science was so far advanced that they could be answered. See Notes on ch. xxvi. 8. Comp. ver. 37 of this chapter. The laws of the production of rain are now better understood, but like all other laws discovered by science, they are adapted to elevate, not to diminish, our conceptions of the wisdom of God. It may be of interest, and may serve to explain the passages in this book which refer to *rain*, as illustrating the wisdom of God, to state what is now the commonly received theory of its cause. That theory is the one proposed by Dr. James Hutton, and first published in the Philosophical Transactions of Edinburgh, in 1784. In this theory it is supposed that the cause consists in the vapor that is held dissolved in the air, and is based on this principle—that the capacity of the air for holding water in a state of vapor increases in a greater ratio than its temperature; that is, that if there are two portions of air which would contain a certain quantity of water in solution if both were heated in an equal degree, the capacity for holding water would be alike; but if one of them be heated more than the other, the amount of water which it would hold in solution is not exactly in proportion to the heat applied, but increases much more rapidly than the heat. It will hold much more water when the temperature is raised than is proportionate to the amount of heat applied. From the experiments which were made by Saussure and others, it was found

that while the temperature of the air rises in arithmetical progression, the dissolving power of the air increases nearly in geometrical progression; that is, if the temperature be represented by the figures 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, &c., the capacity for holding moisture will be nearly represented by the figures 2, 8, 16, 32, 64, &c. Rain is caused in the following manner. When two portions of air of different temperature, and each saturated with moisture, are intermixed, the quantity of moisture in the air thus intermixed, in consequence of the decrease of temperature, will be greater than the air will contain in solution, and will be condensed in a cloud or precipitated to the earth. This law of nature was of course unknown to Job, and is an arrangement which could have been formed only by the all-wise Author of nature. See *Edin. Ency.*, Art., *Meteorology*, p. 181. ¶ Or who hath begotten the drops of dew? Who has produced them—implying that they were caused only by the agency of God. No one among mortals could claim that he had caused the dew to fall. God appeals to the *dew* here, the causes of which were then unknown, as an evidence of his wisdom and supremacy. Dew is moisture condensed from the atmosphere, and that settles on the earth. It usually falls in clear and calm nights, and is caused by a reduction of the temperature of that on which the dew falls. Objects on the surface of the earth become colder than the atmosphere above them, and the consequence is, that the moisture that was suspended in the atmosphere near the surface of the earth is condensed—in the same way as in a hot day moisture will form on the outside of a tumbler or pitcher that is filled with water. The coldness of the vessel containing the water condenses the moisture that was suspended in the surrounding atmosphere. The *cold*, therefore, which accompanies dew, precedes instead of following it. The reason why the surface of the earth becomes cooler than the surrounding atmosphere at night, so as to form dew, has been a subject of considerable inquiry. The theory of Dr. Wells, which is now commonly adopted, is, that the

29 Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost <sup>k</sup> of heaven, who hath gendered it?

30 The waters are hid as *with* a stone, and the face of the deep

*k* ch. 37. 10.

earth is continually radiating its heat to the high and colder regions of the atmosphere; that in the day-time the effects of this radiation are not sensible, being more than counterbalanced by the greater influx of heat from the direct influence of the sun; but that during the night, when the counteracting cause is removed, these effects become sensible, and produce the reduction of temperature which causes dew. The surface of the earth becomes cool by the heat which is radiated to the upper regions of the atmosphere, and the moisture in the air adjacent to the surface of the earth is condensed. This occurs only in a clear and calm night. When the sky is cloudy, the clouds operate as a *screen*, and the radiation of the heat to the higher regions of the atmosphere is prevented, and the surface of the earth and the surrounding atmosphere are kept at the same temperature. See the *Edin. Ency.*, Art., *Meteorology*, pp. 185—188. Of course, these laws were unknown to Job, but now that they are known to us, they constitute not less properly a proof of the wisdom of God.

29. *Out of whose womb came the ice?* That is, who has caused or produced it? The idea is, that it was not by any human agency, or in any known way by which living beings were propagated. ¶ *And the hoary frost of heaven.* Which seems to fall from heaven. The sense is, that it is caused wholly by God. See Notes, ch. xxxvii. 10.

30. *The waters are hid as with a stone.* The solid ice is laid as a stone upon them, wholly concealing them from view. ¶ *And the face of the deep is frozen.* Marg., *taken*. The idea is, they seem to take hold of one another (יִתְּקוּ); they hold together, or cohere. The formation of *ice* is thus appealed to as a proof of the wisdom of God,

is <sup>1</sup> frozen.

31 Canst thou bind the sweet influences of <sup>2</sup> Pleiades, <sup>1</sup> or loose the bands of <sup>3</sup> Orion?

<sup>1</sup> *taken.*

<sup>2</sup> *Cimah, or the seven stars.*

<sup>3</sup> *Cecil.*

and as a thing which Job could not explain. No man could produce this effect; nor could Job explain how it was done.

31. *Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?* The seven stars. On the meaning of the word used here (כִּמָּה, *kimâh*), see Notes on ch. ix. 9. In regard to the meaning of the word rendered *sweet influences*, there has been considerable variety of interpretation. The LXX render it, "Dost thou understand the band (δεσμὸν) of Pleiades?" The Hebrew word (מִתְּקָה) is naturally derived from a word signifying *pleasures*, or *delights* (נִיחָה from נָח, to be soft, or pliant; to enjoy pleasure or delight; hence the word *Eden*), and then it would mean, as in our translation, the delightful influences of the Pleiades; or the influences supposed to be produced by this constellation in imparting happiness, particularly the pleasures enjoyed in the springtime, when that constellation makes its appearance. But Gesenius supposes that the word is derived from נָחַ, *ânâdh*, to bind, and that it is used by transposition for מִתְּקָה, *māânâddoth*. It would then refer to the "bands of Pleiades," and the question would be, whether Job had created the *band* which united the stars composing that constellation in so close union; whether he had bound them together in a cluster or bundle. This idea is adopted by Rosenmüller, Umbreit, and Noyes. Herder renders it, "the brilliant Pleiades." The word "bands" applied to the Pleiades is not unfrequently used in Persian poetry. They were spoken of as a *band* or ornament for the forehead—or compared with a headband made up of diamonds or pearls. Thus Sadi, in his *Gulistan*, p. 22 (Amsterdam, 1651),

32 Canst thou bring forth <sup>1</sup> Mazzaroth in his season? or canst

<sup>1</sup> or, the twelve signs.

speaking of a garden, says, "The earth is strewed, as it were, with emeralds, and the bands of Pleiades appear upon the boughs of the trees." So Hafiz, another Persian poet, says in one of his odes, "Over thy songs Heaven has strewed the bands of the Pleiades as a seal of immortality." The Greenlanders call the Pleiades killukturset, a name given to them because they appear to be bound together. *Egede's Account of the Greenland Mission*, p. 57. See Rosenmüller, *Alte u. neue Morgenland*, No. 768. There seems, however, no good reason for departing from the usual meaning of the word, and then the reference will be to the time when the Pleiades or the seven stars make their appearance—the season of spring. Then the winter disappears; the streams are unlocked; the earth is covered with grass and flowers; the air is sweet and balmy; and a happy influence seems to set in upon the world. There may be some allusion here to the influence which the stars are supposed to exert over the seasons and the affairs of this world, but it is not necessary to suppose this. All that is required in the interpretation of the passage is, that the appearance of certain constellations was connected with certain changes in the seasons; as with spring, summer, or winter. It was not unnatural to infer from that fact, that the constellations exerted an influence in causing those changes, and hence arose the pretended science of astrology. But there is no necessary connexion between the two. The Pleiades appear in the spring, and seem to lead on that joyous season. These stars, so closely set together, seem to be bound to one another in a sisterly union (*Herder*), and thus joyously usher in the spring. God asks Job whether he were the author of that band, and had thus united them for the purpose of ushering in happy influences on the world? ¶ Or loose the bands of Orion. In regard to this constellation, see Notes on ch. ix. 9. The word

thou <sup>2</sup> guide Arcturus with his sons?

<sup>2</sup> guide them.

bands here has been supposed to refer to the girdle with which it is usually represented. Orion is here described as a man girded for action, and is the pioneer of winter. It made its appearance early in the winter, and was regarded as the precursor of storms and tempests. See the quotations in the Notes on ch. ix. 9. Thus appearing in the autumn, this constellation seems to lead on the winter. It comes with strength. It spreads its influence over the air, the earth, the waters, and binds everything at its pleasure. God here asks Job whether he had power to disarm this giant; to unloose his girdle; to divest him of strength; to control the seasons? Had he power over summer and winter, so as to cause them to go or come at his bidding, and to control all those laws which produced them?

32. Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? Marg., "the twelve signs;" that is, the twelve signs of the Zodiac. There has been much diversity of opinion about the meaning of this word. It occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures, and of course it is not easy to determine its signification. The LXX retain the word μαζαρῶθ, without attempting to translate it. Jerome renders it, *Luciferum*—*Lucifer*, the morning-star. The Chaldee, מַזְרָחִיָּא—the constellations of the planets. Coverdale, "the morning-star;" and so Luther renders it. Rosenmüller, *signa caelestia*—the celestial signs, and so Herder, Umbreit, Gesenius, and Noyes, "the Zodiac." Gesenius regards the word מַזְרָחִיָּא—mazzaroth, as the same as מַזְלוֹת—mazzaloth, properly, lodgings, inns; and hence, the lodgings of the sun, or the places or houses in which he appears in the heavens, and thus as meaning the signs of the Zodiac. Most of the Hebrew interpreters adopt this view, but it rests on no certain foundation, and as we are not certain as to the

33 Knowest thou the ordinances <sup>m</sup> of heaven? canst thou

<sup>m</sup> Je. 31. 35, 36.

meaning of the word, the only safe way is to retain the original, as is done in our common version. I do not see how it is possible to determine its meaning with certainty, and probably it is to be regarded as a name given to some constellation or cluster of stars supposed to exert an influence over the seasons, or connected with some change in the seasons, which we cannot now accurately understand. ¶ *Or canst thou guide Arcturus?* On the constellation "Arcturus" (אֲרְכֻשׁ — *āish*), see Notes on ch. ix. 9. The word rendered "guide" in the text, is in the margin "guide them." The Hebrew is, "and *āish* upon [or near—by] her sons, canst thou lead them?" Herder and Umbreit render it, "And lead forth the Bear with her young," or her children. The reference is to the constellation Arcturus, or Ursa Major, in the northern sky. The "sons" referred to are the stars that accompany it, probably the stars that are now called the "tail of the bear." *Umbreit*. Another interpretation is suggested by Herder, which is, that this constellation is represented as a nightly wanderer—a mother, who is seeking her lost children, the stars, that are no longer visible, and that thus revolves around the heavens. But the probable reference is to the constellation conducted round and round the pole as by some unseen hand, like a mother with her children, and the question is, whether Job had skill and power to do this? God appeals to it as a manifestation of his majesty and power, and as far above the skill of man. Who ever looked upon that beautiful constellation and marked its regular revolutions, without feeling that its position and movements were such as God only could produce?

33. *Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven?* The laws or statutes by which the motions of the heavenly bodies are governed. These were wholly un-

set the dominion thereof in the earth?

known in the time of Job, and the discovery of some of those laws—for only a few of them are yet known—was reserved to be the glory of the modern system of astronomy. The suggestion of the great principles of the system gave immortality to the name of Copernicus; and the discovery of those laws in modern times has conferred immortality on the names of Brahe, Kepler, and Newton. The laws which control the heavenly bodies are the most sublime that are known to man, and have done more to impress the human mind with a sense of the majesty of God than any other discoveries made in the material universe. Of course, all those laws were known to God himself, and he appeals to them in proof of his greatness and majesty. The grand and beautiful movements of the heavenly bodies in the time of Job were fitted to produce admiration; and one of the chief delights of those that dwelt under the splendor of an Oriental sky was to contemplate those movements, and to give names to those moving lights. The discoveries of science have enlarged the conceptions of man in regard to the starry heavens far towards immensity; have shown that these twinkling lights are vast worlds and systems, and at the same time have so disclosed the laws by which they are governed, as to promote, where the heart is right, intelligent piety, and elevate the mind to more glorious views of the Creator. ¶ *Canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?* That is, "dost thou assign the dominion of the heavens over the earth?" The reference is, undoubtedly, to the influence of the heavenly bodies upon sublunary objects. The exact extent of that cannot be supposed to have been known in the days of Job, and it is probable that much more was ascribed to the influence of the stars on human affairs than the truth would justify. Nor is its extent now known. It is known that the moon has an in-

34 Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?

35 Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto

fluence over the tides of the ocean; it may be that it has to some extent over the weather; and it is not impossible that the other heavenly bodies may have some effect on the changes observed in the earth which is not understood. Whatever it is, it was and is all known to God, and the idea here is, that it was a proof of his immense superiority over man.

34. *Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?* That is, canst thou command the clouds, so that they shall send down abundant rain? Boullier supposes that there is an allusion here to the incantations which were pretended to be practised by the Magi, by which they claimed the power of producing rain at pleasure. Comp. Jer. xiv. 22, "Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles [the idols that they worship] that can cause rain? Art not thou he, O Lord our God?" The idea is, that it is God only who can cause rain, and that the control of the clouds from which rain descends is wholly beyond the reach of man.

35. *Canst thou send lightnings?* That is, lightning is wholly under the control of God. So it is now; for after all that man has done to discover its laws, and to guard against it, yet still man has made no advances towards a power to wield it, nor is it possible that he ever should. It is one of the agencies in the universe that is always to be under the divine direction; and however much man may subsidize to his purposes wind, and water, and steam, and air, yet there can be no prospect that the forked lightning can be seized by human hands and directed by human skill to purposes of utility or destruction among men. Comp. Notes on ch. xxxvi. 31—33. ¶ *And say unto thee, Here we are.* Marg., *Behold us.* That is, we are at your disposal. This language is derived from the condition of

thee, <sup>1</sup> Here we are?

36 Who hath put wisdom in the inward <sup>a</sup> parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?

<sup>1</sup> Behold us. n Ps. 51. 6.

servants presenting themselves at the call of their masters, and saying that they stood ready to obey their commands. Comp. 1 Sam. iii. 4, 6, 9; Isa. vi. 8.

36. *Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts?* There is great variety in the interpretation of this passage. Jerome renders it, *Quis posuit in visceribus hominis sapientiam? Vel quis dedit gallo intelligentiam?* "Who hath put wisdom in the inner parts of man? Or who has given to the cock intelligence?" The LXX as strangely, "Who hath given to women skill in weaving, and a knowledge of the art of embroidering?" One of the Targums renders it, "Who has given to the woodcock intelligence that he should praise his Master?" Herder renders it, "Who gave understanding to the flying clouds? Or intelligence to the meteors of the air?"

Umbreit,

"Who placed wisdom in the dark clouds?  
Who gave understanding to the forms of the air?"

Schultens and Rosenmüller explain it of the various phenomena that appear in the sky—as lightning, thunder, meteoric lights, &c. So Prof. Lee explains the words as referring to the "tempest" and the "thunder-storm." According to that interpretation, the idea is, that these phenomena appear to be endowed with intelligence. There is proof of plan and wisdom in their arrangement and connexion, and they show that it is not by chance that they are directed. One reason assigned for this interpretation is, that it accords with the connexion. The course of the argument, it is remarked, relates to the various phenomena that appear in the sky—to the lightnings, tempests, and clouds. It is unnatural to suppose that a remark would be interposed here respecting the intellectual endowments of man, when the appeal to the clouds is again (ver. 37) immediately resumed. There can

### 37 Who can number the clouds in wisdom? or who can <sup>1</sup> stay the bottles of heaven,

<sup>1</sup> *cause to lie down.*

be no doubt that there is much weight in this observation, and that the connexion demands this interpretation, and that it should be adopted if the words which are used will admit of it. The only difficulty relates to the words rendered "inward parts," and "heart." The former of these (חִסְרוֹן) according to the Hebrew interpreters, is derived from חָסַם—*tuahh*, to cover over, to spread, to besmear; and is hence given to the veins, because covered with fat. It occurs only in this place, and in Ps. li. 6, "Behold thou desirest truth in the *inward parts*," where it undoubtedly refers to the seat of the affections or thoughts in man. The *verb* is often used as meaning to daub, overlay, or plaster, as in Lev. xiv. 42; Ezek. xxii. 28, xiii. 12, 14. Schultens, Lee, Umbreit, and others, have recourse, in the explanation, to the use of the Arabic word of the same letters with the Hebrew, meaning to *wander, to make a random shot, &c.*, and thence apply it to lightning, and to meteors. Umbreit supposes that there is allusion to the prevalent opinion in the East that the clouds and the phenomena of the air could be regarded as furnishing prophetic indications of what was to occur; or to the custom of predicting future events by the aspects of the sky. It is a sufficient objection to this, however, that it cannot be supposed that the Almighty would lend his sanction to this opinion by appealing to it as if it were so. After all that has been written on the passage, and all the force of the difficulty which is urged, I do not see evidence that we are to depart from the common interpretation—to wit, that God means to appeal to the fact that he has endowed man with intelligence as a proof of his greatness and supremacy. The connexion is, indeed, not very apparent. It may be, however, as Noyes suggests, that the reference is to the mind of Job in particular, and to the intelligence with which he was able to perceive, and in some measure to com-

prehend, these various phenomena. The connexion may be something like this: "Look to the heavens, and contemplate these wonders. Explain them, if possible; and then ask who it is that has so endowed the mind of man that it *can* trace in them such proofs of the wisdom and power of the Almighty. The phenomena themselves, and the capacity to contemplate them, and to be instructed by them, are alike demonstrations of the supremacy of the Most High." ¶ *Understanding to the heart.* To the mind. The common word to denote *heart*—לֵב, is not used here, but a word (שָׁקַף from שָׁקַף) meaning to look at, to view; and hence denoting the mind, the intelligent soul. Gesenius.

37. *Who can number the clouds?* The word here rendered *clouds* (עָנָן) is applied to the clouds as made up of *small particles*—as if they were composed of fine dust, and hence the word *number* is applied to them, not as meaning that the clouds themselves were innumerable, but that no one could estimate the number of particles which enter into their formation. ¶ *In wisdom.* By his wisdom. Who has sufficient intelligence to do it? ¶ *Or who can stay the bottles of heaven?* Marg., as in Heb., *cause to lie down.* The clouds are here compared with bottles, as if they held the water in the same manner. Comp. Notes on ch. xxvi. 8. The word rendered "stay" in the text, and in the margin "cause to lie down," is rendered by Umbreit, "pour out," from an Arabic signification of the word. Gesenius supposes that the meaning to "pour out" is derived from the idea of "causing to lie down," from the fact that a bottle or vessel was made to lie down, or was inclined to one side, when its contents were poured out. This explanation seems probable, though there is no other place in the Hebrew where the word is used in this signification. The sense of pouring out agrees well with the connexion.

38 When the dust <sup>1</sup> groweth into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together?

39 Wilt thou hunt the prey for the <sup>o</sup> lion? or fill the <sup>2</sup> appetite of the young lions,

<sup>1</sup> is poured, or, is turned into mire.  
o Ps. 104. 21. <sup>2</sup> life.

38. *When the dust groweth into hardness.* Marg., "is poured, or, is turned into mire." The words here used relate often to metals, and to the act of pouring them out when fused, for the purpose of casting. The proper idea here is, "when the dust flows into a molten mass;" that is, when wet with rain, it flows together and becomes hard. The sense is, that the rain operates on the clay as heat does on metals, and that when it is dissolved, it flows together, and thus becomes a solid mass. The object is to compare the effect of rain with the usual effect in casting metals. ¶ *And the clods cleave fast together.* That is, they are run together by the rain. They form one mass of the same consistency, and then are baked hard by the sun.

39. *Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion?* The appeal here is to the *instincts* with which God has endowed animals, and to the fact that he had so made them that they would secure their own food. He asks Job whether he would undertake to do what the lion did by instinct in finding his food, and by his power and skill in seizing his prey. There was a wise adaptation of the lion for this purpose which man could neither originate nor explain. ¶ *Or fill the appetite of the young lions.* Marg., as in Heb., *life*. The word *life* is here used for hunger, as the appetite is necessarily connected with the preservation of life. The meaning here is, "Wouldst thou undertake to supply his wants? It is done by laws, and in a manner which thou canst not explain. There are, in the arrangement by which it is accomplished, marks of wisdom which far surpass the skill of man to originate, and the instinct and power by which it is done are proof of the supremacy of

40 When they couch in *their* dens, and abide in the covert to lie in wait?

41 Who provideth for the raven <sup>p</sup> his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.

p Ps. 147. 9. Mat. 6. 26.

the Most High." No one can study the subject of the instincts of animals, or become in the least acquainted with Natural History, without finding everywhere traces of the wisdom and goodness of God.

40. *When they couch in their dens.* For the purpose of springing upon their prey. ¶ *And abide in the covert to lie in wait?* The usual posture of the lion, when he seeks his prey. He places himself in some unobserved position in a dense thicket, or crouches upon the ground so as not to be seen, and then springs suddenly upon his victim. The common method of the lion in taking his prey is to spring or throw himself upon it from the place of his ambush, with one vast bound, and to inflict the mortal blow with one stroke of his paw. If he misses his aim, however, he seldom attempts another spring at the same object, but deliberately returns to the thicket in which he lay in concealment. See the habits of the lion illustrated in the *Edin. Ency.*, Art., *Mazology*.

41. *Who provideth for the raven his food?* The same thought is expressed in Ps. cxlvii. 9,

He giveth to the beast his food,  
And to the young ravens which cry.

Comp. Matth. vi. 26. Scheutzer (*in loc.*) suggests that the reason why the raven is specified here rather than other fowls, is, that it is an offensive bird, and that God means to state that no object, however regarded by man, is beneath his notice. He carefully provides for the wants of all his creatures. ¶ *When his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.* Bochart observes that the raven expels the young from the nest as soon as they are able to fly. In this condition, being unable to obtain

food by their own exertions, they make a croaking noise, and God is said to hear it, and to supply their wants. *Noyes*. There are various opinions expressed in regard to this subject by the Rabbinical writers, and by the ancients generally. Rabbi Eliezer (cap. 21) says that, "When the old ravens see the young coming into the world which are not black, they regard them as the offspring of serpents, and flee away from them, and God takes care of them." Rabbi Solomon says that in this condition they are nourished by the flies and worms that are generated in their nests, and the same opinion was held by the Arabian writers, Haritius, Alkuazin, and Damir. Among the fathers of the church, Chrysostom, Olympiodorus, Gregory, and Isidorus, supposed that they were nurtured by dew descending from heaven. Pliny (Lib. x. c. 12) says, that the old ravens expel the strongest of their young from the nest, and compel them to fly. This is the time, according to many of

the older commentators, when the young ravens are represented as calling upon God for food. See Scheutzer, *Physica Sacra*, in *loc.*, and Bochart, *Hieroz.* P. ii. L. ii. c. ii. I do not know that there is now supposed to be sufficient evidence to substantiate this fact in regard to the manner in which the ravens treat their young, and all the circumstances of the place before us will be met by the supposition that young birds seem to call upon God, and that he supplies their wants. The last three verses in this chapter should not have been separated from the following. The appeal in this is to the animal creation, and this is continued through the whole of the next chapter. The proper place for the division would have been at the close of verse 38, where the argument from the great laws of the material universe was ended. Then commences an appeal to his works of a higher order—the region of instinct and appetites, where creatures are governed by other than mere physical laws.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

## ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

THE argument in proof of the divine wisdom and greatness, which was commenced at ver. 39 of the previous chapter, is continued in this. The argument is drawn from the instincts, habits, and power of the animal creation. It is, in substance, that the arrangements for the preservation of the brutes, their instincts, and the power which they exhibit, far surpass all the wisdom and power of man to have imparted them. He could not even explain those things which God had made. In the prosecution of this argument, God appeals (1.) To the wild goats of the rocks, and the hinds, and to the paternal care and tenderness with which he regards them, vs. 1–4. (2.) To the wild ass, exulting in his freedom, scorning restraint, and roaming at large in the wilderness and in the extended plains, vs. 5–8. (3.) To the unicorn, and to his great strength, far surpassing that of man, and to the fact that he could not be subjugated as other animals are, and made subservient to the purposes of agriculture, vs. 9–12. (4.) To the wings and feathers of the ostrich. Especially, God asks of Job whether he had ordained the remarkable laws by which she was governed in reference to her young, and which were so unlike the usual habits of the animal creation, vs. 13–18. (5.) To the horse—his strength, his majesty, his courage, his impatience for battle, vs. 19–25. (6.) To the hawk, evincing consummate wisdom in its instincts, ver. 26. (7.) To the eagle—the king of birds, and to the laws by which it secures its food. By an appeal to the habits and instincts of these animals, God designs to impress the mind with the conviction of his wisdom and greatness, and to show to man how incompetent he is to pronounce on his doings.

**K**NOWEST thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? or canst thou mark when the hinds<sup>a</sup> do calve?

a Ps. 29. 9.

1. Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? That is,

the particular season when the mountain goats bring forth their young. Or



domestic animals—the sheep, the tame goat, &c., the habits would be fully understood. But the question here relates to the animals that roamed at large on inaccessible cliffs; that were buried in deep forests; that were far from the dwellings and observation of men; and the meaning is, that there were many facts in regard to such points of Natural History which Job could not explain. God knew all their instincts and habits, and on the inaccessible cliffs, in the deep dell, in the dark forest, he was with them, and they were the objects of his care. He not only regarded the condition of the domestic animals that had been brought into the service of man, and where man, perhaps, *might* be disposed to claim that they owed much of their comfort to *his* care, but he regarded also the wild, wandering beast of the mountain, where no such pretence could be advanced. The providence of God is over them; and in the periods of their lives when they seem most to need attention, when every shepherd and herdsman is most solicitous about his flocks and herds, then God is present, and his care is seen in their preservation. The particular point in the inquiry here is, not in regard to the *time* when these animals produced their young, or the period of their gestation, which might probably be known, but in regard to the attention and care which was needful for them when they were so far removed from the observance of man, and had no human aid. The “wild goat of the rock” here referred to, is, doubtless, the Ibex, or mountain goat, that has its dwellings among the rocks, or in stony places. The Hebrew term is *יָאֵל*, *yâél*, or *yaal*, from *יָאָל*, *yââl*, to ascend, to go up. They had their residence in the lofty rocks of mountains. Ps. civ. 18, “The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats.” Heb., “For the goats of the rocks”—*עֵיִם סֵלִים*. So in 1 Sam. xxiv. 2. [3.] “Saul went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats;” that is, where were the wild goats—*הַיָּאֵלִים*. For a description of the wild goat, see Bochart, Hieroz. P. i. Lib. iii. c. xxiii.

The animal here referred to is, doubtless, the same which Burckhardt saw on the summit of Mount St. Catherine, adjacent to Mount Sinai, and which he thus describes in his Travels in Syria, p. 571: “As we approached the summit of the mountain (St. Catherine, adjacent to Mount Sinai), we saw at a distance a small flock of mountain goats feeding among the rocks. One of our Arabs left us, and by a widely circuitous route endeavoured to get to the leeward of them, and near enough to fire at them. He enjoined us to remain in sight of them, and to sit down in order not to alarm them. He had nearly reached a favorable spot behind a rock, when the goats suddenly took to flight. They could not have seen the Arab, but the wind changed, and thus they smelt him. The chase of the *beden*, as the wild goat is called, resembles that of the chamois of the Alps, and requires as much enterprise and patience. The Arabs make long circuits to surprise them, and endeavour to come upon them early in the morning, when they feed. The goats have a leader who keeps watch, and on any suspicious smell, sound, or object, makes a noise, which is a signal to the flock to make their escape. They have much decreased of late, if we may believe the Arabs, who say, that fifty years ago, if a stranger came to a tent, and the owner of it had no sheep to kill, he took his gun and went in search of a *beden*. They are, however, even now more common here than in the Alps, or in the mountains to the east of the Red Sea. I had three or four of them brought to me at the convent, which I bought at three-fourths of a dollar each. The flesh is excellent, and has nearly the same flavor as that of the deer. The Bedouins make water-bags of their skins, and rings of their horns, which they wear on their thumb. When the *beden* is met with in the plains, the dogs of the hunters easily catch him; but they cannot come up with him among the rocks, where he can make leaps of twenty feet.” ¶ Or *canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?* The reference here is to the special care and protection of God manifested

2 Canst thou number the months *that* they fulfil? or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?

3 They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their sorrows.

for them. The meaning is, that this animal seems to be always timid and apprehensive of danger, and that there is special care bestowed upon an animal so defenceless in enabling it to rear its young. The word *hinds* denotes the deer, the fawn, the most timid and defenceless, perhaps, of all animals.

2. *Canst thou number the months, &c.* That is, as they wander in the wilderness, as they live in inaccessible crags and cliffs of the rocks, it is impossible for man to be acquainted with their habits as he can with those of the domestic animals.

3. *They bow themselves.* Literally, they *curve* or bend themselves; that is, they draw their limbs together. ¶ *They cast out their sorrows.* That is, they cast forth the *offspring* of their pains, or the young which cause their pains. The idea seems to be, that they do this without any of the care and attention which shepherds are obliged to show to their flocks at such seasons. They do it when God only guards them; when they are in the wilderness or on the rocks far away from the abodes of man. The leading thought in all this seems to be, that the tender care of God was over his creatures, in the most perilous and delicate state, and that all this was exercised where man could have no access to them, and could not even observe them.

4. *Their young ones are in good liking.* Heb., "they are fat;" and hence it means that they are strong and robust. ¶ *They grow up with corn.* Herder, Gesenius, Noyes, Umbreit, and Rosenmüller render this, "in the wilderness," or "field." The proper and usual meaning of the word here used (רָעָה) is corn, or grain; but in Chaldee it has the sense of *open fields, or country*. The same

4 Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with corn; they go forth, and return not unto them.

5 Who hath sent out the wild ass <sup>b</sup> free? or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?

b Je. 2. 24. Ho. 8. 9.

idea is found in the Arabic, and this sense seems to be required by the connexion. The idea is not that they are nurtured with *grain*, which would require the care of man, but that they are nurtured under the direct eye of God far away from human dwellings, and even when they go away from their dam and return no more to the place of their birth. This is one of the instances, therefore, in which the connexion seems to require us to adopt a signification that does not elsewhere occur in the Hebrew, but which is found in the cognate languages. ¶ *They go forth, and return not unto them.* God guards and preserves them, even when they wander away from their dam, and are left helpless. Many of the young of animals require long attention from man, many are kept for a considerable period by the side of the mother, but the idea here seems to be, that the young of the wild goat and of the fawn are thrown early on the providence of God, and are protected by him alone. The particular care of Providence over these animals seems to be specified because there are no others that are exposed to so many dangers in their early life. "Every creature then is a formidable enemy. The eagle, the falcon, the osprey, the wolf, the dog, and all the rapacious animals of the cat kind, are in continual employment to find out their retreat. But what is more unnatural still, the stag himself is a professed enemy, and she [the hind] is obliged to use all her arts to conceal her young from him, as from the most dangerous of her pursuers." *Goldsmith's Nat. Hist.*

5. *Who hath sent out the wild ass free?* For a description of the wild ass, see Notes on ch. xi. 12. On the meaning of the word rendered *free*

6 Whose <sup>c</sup> house I have made

c c. 24. 5.

(וַחֲמֹר), see Notes on Isa. lviii. 6. These animals commonly "inhabit the dry and mountainous parts of the deserts of Great Tartary, but not higher than about lat. 48°. They are migratory, and arrive in vast troops to feed, during the summer, on the tracts to the north and east of the sea of Aral. About autumn they collect in herds of hundreds, and even thousands, and direct their course southward towards India, to enjoy a warm retreat during winter. But they more usually retire to Persia, where they are found in the mountains of Casbin, and where part of them remain during the whole year. They are also said to penetrate to the southern parts of India, to the mountains of Malabar and Golconda. These animals were anciently found in Palestine, Syria, Arabia Deserta, Mesopotamia, Phrygia, and Lycaonia, but they rarely occur in those regions at the present time, and seem to be almost entirely confined to Tartary, some parts of Persia and India, and Africa. Their manners resemble those of the wild horse. They assemble in troops under the conduct of a leader or sentinel, and are extremely shy and vigilant. They will, however, stop in the midst of their course, and even suffer the approach of man for an instant, and then dart off with the utmost rapidity. They have been at all times celebrated for their swiftness. Their voice resembles that of the common ass, but is shriller." *Rob. Calmet*. The Onager or wild ass is doubtless "the parent stock from which we have derived the useful domestic animal, which seems to have degenerated the farther it has been removed from its parent seat in Central Asia. It is greatly distinguished in spirit and grace of form from the domestic ass. It is taller and more dignified; it holds the head higher, and the legs are more elegantly shaped. Even the head, though large in proportion to the body, has a finer appearance, from the forehead being more arched; the neck by which it is sustained is much longer,

the wilderness, and the <sup>1</sup> barren land his dwellings.

<sup>1</sup> salt places.

and has a more graceful bend. It has a short mane of dark and woolly hair; and a stripe of dark bushy hair also runs along the ridge of the back from the mane to the tail. The hair of the body is of a silver gray, inclining to flaxen color in some parts, and white under the belly. The hair is soft and silken, similar in texture to that of the camel." *Pict. Bible*. It is of this animal, so different in spirit, energy, agility, and appearance, from the domestic animal of that name, that we must think in order to understand this passage. We must think of them fleet as the wind, untamed and unbroken, wandering over vast plains in groups and herds, assembled by thousands under a leader or guide, and bounding off with uncontrollable rapidity on the approach of man, if we would feel the force of the appeal which is here made. God asks of Job whether *he*—who could not even subdue and tame this wild creature—had ordained the laws of its freedom; had held it as a captive, and then set it at liberty to exult over boundless plains in its conscious independence. The idea is, that it was one of the creatures of God, under *no* laws but such as *he* had been pleased to impose upon it, and wholly beyond the government of man. ¶ *Or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?* As if he had been once a captive, and then set free. The illustration is derived from the feeling which attends a restoration to liberty. The freedom of this animal *seems* to be as productive of exhilaration as if it had been a prisoner or slave, and had been suddenly emancipated.

6. *Whose house I have made.* God had appointed its home in the desert. ¶ *And the barren land his dwellings.* Marg., as in Heb., *salt places*. Such places were usually barren. Ps. cvii. 34, "He turneth a fruitful land into barrenness." Heb., *saltiness*. Thus Virgil, *Geor.* ii. 238—240,

"Salsa autem tellus, et quæ perhibetur amara,  
Frugibus infelix: ea nec mansuescit arando  
Nec Baccho genus, aut pomis  
servat."

7 He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the <sup>1</sup> driver.

8 The range of the mountains

<sup>1</sup> *exactor*, c. 3. 18.

Comp. Pliny, Nat. Hist. 31. 7. Deut. xxix. 23.

7. *He scorneth the multitude of the city.* That is, he sets all this at defiance; he is not intimidated by it. He finds his home far away from the city in the wild freedom of the wilderness. ¶ *Neither regardeth he the crying of the driver.* Marg., *exactor*. The Hebrew word properly means a collector of taxes or revenue, and hence an oppressor, and a driver of cattle. The allusion here is to a driver, and the meaning is, that he is not subject to restraint, but enjoys <sup>1</sup> be most unlimited freedom.

8. *The range of the mountains is his pasture.* The word rendered *range* (רָמַ), means, properly, a *searching out*, and then that which is obtained by search. The word *range* expresses the idea with sufficient exactness. The usual range of the wild ass is the mountains. Pallas, who has given a full description of the habits of the Onager, or wild ass, states, that it especially loves desolate hills as its abode. *Acts of the Society of Sciences of Petersburg, for the year 1777.*

9. *Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee?* In the previous part of the argument, God had appealed to the lion, the raven, the goats of the rock, the hind, and the wild ass; and the idea was, that, in the instincts of each of those classes of animals, there was some special proof of wisdom. He now turns to another class of the animal creation in proof of his own supremacy and power, and lays the argument in the great strength and in the independence of the animal, and in the fact that man had not been able to subject his great strength to the purposes of husbandry. In regard to the animal here referred to, there has been great diversity of opinion among interpreters, nor is there as yet any one prevailing sentiment. Jerome renders it *rhinoceros*; the LXX,

is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing.

9 Will the unicorn <sup>d</sup> be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib?

<sup>d</sup> De. 33. 17. Ps. 92. 10.

μονόκερως, the unicorn; the Chaldee and the Syriac retain the Hebrew word; Gesenius, Herder, Umbreit, and Noyes, render it the *buffalo*; Schultens, *alticornem*; Luther and Coverdale, the *unicorn*; Rosenmüller, the *onyx*, a large and fierce species of the antelope; Calmet supposes that the rhinoceros is intended; and Prof. Robinson, in an extended appendage to the article of Calmet (Art., *Unicorn*), has endeavored to show that the wild buffalo is intended. Bochart, also, in a long and learned argument, has endeavored to show that the rhinoceros cannot be meant. Hieroz. P. i. Lib. iii. c. xxi. He maintains that a species of antelope is referred to, the *rim* of the Arabs. De Wette (Com. on Ps. xxii. 22) accords with the opinion of Gesenius, Robinson, and others, that the animal referred to is the buffalo of the Eastern continent, the *bos bubalus* of Linnæus, an animal which differs from the American buffalo only in the shape of the horns and the absence of the dewlap. The word which occurs here, and which is rendered *unicorn* (רֵמַ, or רֵמָה, *rēm*), is used in the Scriptures only in the following places, where in the singular or plural it is uniformly rendered *unicorn*, or *unicorns*—Num. xxiii. 22; Deut. xxxiii. 17; Job xxxix. 9, 10; Ps. xxii. 21, xxix. 6, xcii. 10; and Isa. xxxii. 7. By a reference to these passages, it will be found that the animal had the following characteristics: (1.) It was distinguished for its *strength*. See ver. 11 of this chapter. Num. xxiii. 22, "He [that is, Israel, or the Israelites] hath as it were the strength of an unicorn"—רֵמַ, *rēm*. In Num. xxiv. 8, the same declaration is repeated. It is true that the Hebrew word in both these places (רָמַ) may denote *rapidity of motion, speed*; but in this place the notion of *strength* must be principally in-

tended, for it was of the *power* of the people, and their ability manifested in the number of their hosts, that Balaam is speaking. Bochart, however (Hieroz. P. i. Lib. iii. c. xxvii.), supposes that the word means, not strength or agility, but *height*, and that the idea is, that the people referred to by Balaam was a lofty or elevated people. If the word means *strength*, it was most appropriate to compare a vast host of people with the vigor and force of an untameable wild animal. The idea of *speed* or of *loftiness* does not so well suit the connexion. (2.) It was an animal that was not subjected to the service of tilling the soil, and that was supposed to be incapable of being so trained. Thus in the place before us it is said, that he could not be so domesticated that he would remain like the ox at the crib; that he could not be yoked to the plough; that he could not be employed and safely left to pursue the work of the field; and that he could not be so subdued that it would be safe to attempt to bring home the harvest by his aid. From all these declarations, it is plain that he was regarded as a wild and untamed animal; an animal that was not then domesticated, and that could not be employed in husbandry. This characteristic would agree with either the antelope, the onyx, the buffalo, the rhinoceros, or the supposed unicorn. With which of them it will *best* accord, we may be able to determine when all his characteristics are examined. (3.) The strength of the animal was in his horns. This was one of his peculiar characteristics, and it is evidently by this that he is designed to be distinguished. Deut. xxxiii. 17, "His glory is like the firstling of a bullock, and his horns like the horns of unicorns." Ps. xcii. 10, "My horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn." Ps. xxii. 21, "Thou hast heard me [saved me] from the horns of the unicorns." It is true, indeed, as Prof. Robinson has remarked (Calmet, Art., *Unicorn*), the word *reem* has in itself no reference to *horns*, nor is there in the Hebrew an allusion anywhere to the supposition that the animal here referred to has only *one* horn. Wherever, in the Scriptures, the ani-

mal is spoken of with any allusion to this member, the expression is in the plural, *horns*. The only variation from this, even in the common version, is in Ps. xcii. 10, where the Hebrew is simply, "My horn shalt thou exalt like an unicorn," where the word *horn*, as it stands in the English version, is not expressed. There is, indeed, in this passage, some obvious allusion to the *horns* of this animal, but all the force of the comparison will be retained if the word inserted in the ellipsis is in the plural number. The horn or horns of the *reem* were, however, beyond question, the principal seat of strength, and the instruments of assault and defence. See the passage in Deut. xxxiii. 17, "With them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth." (4.) There was some peculiar majesty or dignity in the horns of this animal that attracted attention, and that made them the proper symbol of dominion and of royal authority. Thus in Ps. xcii. 10, "My horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn," where the reference seems to be to a kingly authority or dominion, of which the horn was an appropriate symbol. These are all the characteristics of the animal referred to in the Scriptures, and the question is, With what known animal do they best correspond? The principal animals referred to by those who have examined the subject at length, are the onyx or antelope; the buffalo; the animal commonly referred to as the unicorn, and the rhinoceros. The principal characteristic of the *unicorn* was supposed to be, that it had a long slender horn projecting from the *forehead*; the horn of the rhinoceros is on the *snout*, or the nose. I. In regard to the antelope, or the *rim* of the modern Arabs, supposed by Bochart to be the animal here referred to, it seems clear that there are few characteristics in common between the two animals. The onyx or antelope is not distinguished as this animal is for strength, nor for the fact that it is peculiarly untameable, nor that its strength is in its horns, nor that it is of such size and proportions that a comparison would naturally be suggested between it and the ox. In all that is said of the animal, we think of one

greater in bulk, in strength, in untameableness, than the onyx; an animal more distinguished for conquest and subduing other animals before him. Bochart has collected much that is fabulous respecting this animal, from the Rabbins and the Arabic writers, which it is not needful here to repeat. See the Hieroz, P. i. Lib. iii. c. xxvii., or Scheutzer, Physi. Sac. on Num. xxiii. 22. II. The claims of the *buffalo* to be regarded as the animal here referred to are much higher than those of the onyx, and the opinion that this is the animal intended is entertained by such names as those of Gesenius, De Wette, Robinson, Umbreit, and Herder. But the objections to this seem to me to be insuperable, and the arguments are not such as to carry conviction. The principal objections to the opinion are, (1.) that the account in regard to the horns of the *reem* by no means agrees with the fact in regard to the bison, or buffalo. The buffalo is an animal of the cow kind, (Goldsmith,) and the horns are short and crooked, and by no means distinguished for strength. They do not, in fact, surpass in this respect the horns of many other animals, and are not such as would occur ordinarily as the prominent characteristic in their description. It is true that there are instances where the horns of the wild buffalo are large, but this does not appear to be the case ordinarily. Mr. Pennant mentions a pair of horns in the British Museum, which are six feet and a half long, and the hollow of which will hold five quarts. Father Lobo affirms that some of the horns of the buffaloes in Abyssinia will hold ten quarts; and Dillon saw some in India that were ten feet long. But these were manifestly extraordinary cases. (2.) The animal here referred to was evidently a stronger and a larger animal than the wild ox, or the buffalo. "The Oriental buffalo appears to be so closely allied to our common ox, that without an attentive examination, it might be easily mistaken for a variety of that animal. In point of size, it is rather superior to the ox; and upon an accurate inspection, it is observed to differ in the shape and magnitude of the head, the latter being larger than in the

ox." *Robinson, in Calmet.* The animal here referred to was such as to make the contrast particularly striking between him and the ox. The latter could be employed for labor; the former, though greatly superior in strength, could not. (3.) The *reem*, it was supposed, could not be tamed and made to subserve domestic purposes. The buffalo, however, can be made as serviceable as the ox, and is actually domesticated and employed in agricultural purposes. Niebuhr remarks that he saw buffaloes not only in Egypt, but also at Bombay, Surat, on the Euphrates, Tigris, Orontes, and indeed in all marshy regions and near large rivers. Sonnini remarks that in Egypt the buffalo, though but recently domesticated, is more numerous than the common ox, and is there equally domestic, and in Italy they are known to be commonly employed in the Pontine marshes, where the fatal nature of the climate acts on common cattle, but affects buffaloes less. It is true that the animal has been comparatively recently domesticated, and that it was doubtless known in the time of Job only as a wild, savage, ferocious animal; but still the description here is that of an animal not only that *was not* then tamed, but obviously of one that could not well be employed in domestic purposes. We are to remember that the language here is that of God himself, and that therefore it may be regarded as descriptive of what the essential nature of the animal was, rather than what it was supposed to be by the persons to whom the language was addressed. One of the principal arguments alleged for supposing that the animal here referred to by the *reem* was the buffalo, is, that the rhinoceros was probably unknown in the land where Job resided, and that the unicorn was altogether a fabulous animal. This difficulty will be considered in the remarks to be made on the claims of each of those animals. III. It was an early opinion, and the opinion was probably entertained by the authors of the Septuagint translation, and by the English translators as well as by others, that the animal here referred to was the

*unicorn*. This animal was long supposed to be a fabulous animal, and it has not been until recently that the evidences of its existence have been confirmed. Those evidences are adduced by Rosenmüller, *Morgenland*, ii. p. 269, *seq.*, and by Prof. Robinson, *Calmet*, pp. 908, 909. They are, summarily, the following: (1.) Pliny mentions such an animal, and gives a description of it, though from his time for centuries it seems to have been unknown. *Hist. Nat.* 8. 21. His language is, *Asperimam autem feram monocerotem reliquo corpore equo similem, capite cervo, pedibus elephantis, cauda apro, mugitu gravi, uno cornu nigro media fronte cubitorum duum eminente. Hanc feram vivam negant capi.* "The unicorn is an exceeding fierce animal, resembling a horse as to the rest of his body, but having the head like a stag, the feet like an elephant, and the tail like a wild boar; its roaring is loud; and it has a black horn of about two cubits projecting from the middle of the forehead." (2.) The figure of the unicorn, in various attitudes, according to Niebuhr, is depicted on almost all the staircases in the ruins of Persepolis. *Reisebeschreib.* ii. S. 127. (3.) In 1530, Ludovico de Bartema, a Roman patrician, visited Mecca under the assumed character of a Mussulman, and among other curiosities that he mentions, he says, "On the other side of the caaba is a walled court, in which we saw two unicorns that were pointed out to us as a rarity; and they are indeed truly remarkable. The larger of the two is built like a three-year-old colt, and has a horn upon the forehead about three ells long. This animal has the color of a yellowish-brown horse, a head like a stag, a neck not very long, with a thin mane; the legs are small and slender like those of a hind or roe; the hoofs of the fore feet are divided, and resemble the hoofs of a goat. Rosenmüller, *Alte u. neue Morgenland*, No. 377. Th. ii. S. 271, 272. (4.) Don Juan Gabriel, a Portuguese colonel, who lived several years in Abyssinia, assures us that in the region of Agamos, in the Abyssinian province of Damota, he had seen an

animal of the form and size of a middle-sized horse, of a dark chestnut-brown color, and with a whitish horn about five spans long upon its forehead; the mane and tail were black, and the legs long and slender. Several other Portuguese, who were placed in confinement upon a high mountain in the district Namna, by the Abyssinian king Saghedo, related that they had seen at the mountain several unicorns feeding. These accounts are confirmed by Father Lobo, who lived for a long time as a missionary in Abyssinia. (5.) Dr. Sparrman, the Swedish naturalist, who visited the Cape of Good Hope and the adjacent regions in 1772-1776, gives, in his *Travels*, the following account:—Jacob Kock, an observing peasant on Hippopotamus river, who had travelled over a considerable part of Southern Africa, found on the face of a perpendicular rock, a drawing made by the Hottentots of an animal with a single horn. The Hottentots told him that the animal there represented was very like the horse on which he rode, but had a straight horn upon the forehead. They added, that these one-horned animals were rare; that they ran with great rapidity, and that they were very fierce. (6.) A similar animal is described as having been killed by a party of Hottentots in pursuit of the savage Bushmen in 1791. The animal resembled a horse, was of a light grey color, and with white stripes under the jaw. It had a single horn directly in front, as long as one's arm, and at the base about as thick. Towards the middle the horn was somewhat flattened, but had a sharp point; it was not attached to the bone of the forehead, but was fixed only in the skin. The head was like that of the horse, and the size about the same. These authorities are collected by Rosenmüller, *Alte u. neue Morgenland*, vol. ii. p. 269, *seq.*, ed. Leipz. 1818. (7.) To these proofs one other is added by Prof. Robinson. It is copied from the Quarterly Review for Oct. 1820, (vol. xxiv. p. 120.) in a notice of Frazer's Tour through the Himalaya mountains. The information is contained in a letter from Maj. Latter, com-

manding in the rajah of Sikkim's territories, in the hilly country east of Nepal. This letter states that the unicorn, so long considered as a fabulous animal, actually exists in the interior of Thibet, where it is well known to the inhabitants. "In a Thibetian manuscript," says Maj. Latter, "containing the names of different animals, which I procured the other day from the hills, the unicorn is classed under the head of those whose hoofs are divided: it is called the one-horned *ts'o'po*. Upon inquiring what kind of an animal it was, to our astonishment, the person who brought the manuscript described exactly the unicorn of the ancients; saying that it was a native of the interior of Thibet, about the size of a *tattoo*, (a horse from twelve to thirteen hands high,) fierce and extremely wild; seldom if ever caught alive, but frequently shot; and that the flesh was used for food. They go together in herds, like wild buffaloes, and are frequently to be met with on the borders of the great desert, in that part of the country inhabited by wandering Tartars." (8.) To these proofs I add another, taken from the Narrative of the Rev. John Campbell, who thus speaks of it, in his "Travels in South Africa," vol. ii. p. 294. "While in the Mashow territory, the Hottentots brought in a head different from any rhinoceros that had been previously killed. The common African rhinoceros has a crooked horn resembling a cock's spur, which rises about nine or ten inches above the nose, and inclines backward; immediately behind this is a short thick horn. But the head they brought us had a straight horn projecting three feet from the forehead, about ten inches above the tip of the nose. The projection of this great horn very much resembles that of the fanciful unicorn in the British arms. It has a small, thick, horny substance, eight inches long, immediately behind it, and which can hardly be observed on the animal at the distance of one hundred yards, and seems to be designed for keeping fast that which is penetrated by the long horn; so that this species must look like the unicorn (in the sense "one-horned") when run-

ning in the field. The head resembled in size a nine-gallon cask, and measured three feet from the mouth to the ear; and being much larger than that of the one with the crooked horn, and which measured eleven feet in length, the animal itself must have been still larger and more formidable. From its weight and the position of the horn, it appears capable of overcoming any creature hitherto known." A fragment of the skull, with the horn, is deposited in the Museum of the London Missionary Society. These testimonies from so many witnesses from different parts of the world who write without concert, and yet who concur so almost entirely in the account of the size and figure of the animal, leave little room to doubt its real existence. That it is no better known, and that its existence has been doubted, is not wonderful. It is to be remembered that all accounts agree in the representation that it is an animal whose residence is in deserts or mountains, and that large parts of Africa and of Asia are still unexplored. We are to remember, also, that the *giraffe* has been discovered only within a few years, and that the same is true of the *gnu*, which, till recently, was held to be a fable of the ancients. At the same time, however, that the existence of such an animal as that of the unicorn is in the highest degree probable, it is clear that it is *not* the animal referred to in the passage before us: for (1.) it is in the highest degree improbable that it was so well known as is supposed in the description here; and (2.) the characteristics do not at all agree with the account of the *reem* of the Scriptures. Neither in regard to the size of the animal, its strength, or the strength of its horns, does it coincide with the account of that animal in the Bible. IV. If neither of the opinions above referred to be correct, then the only remaining opinion that has weight is, that it refers to the rhinoceros. Besides the considerations above suggested, it may be added that the characteristics of the animal given in the Scriptures all agree with the rhinoceros. In size, strength, wildness, untameableness, and in the power and use of the horn, those



characteristics agree accurately with the rhinoceros. The only argument of much weight against this opinion is presented by Prof. Robinson in the following language: "The *reem* was obviously an animal well known to the Hebrews, being everywhere mentioned with other animals common to the country, while the rhinoceros was never an inhabitant of the country, is nowhere else spoken of by the sacred writers, nor, according to Bochart, either by Aristotle, in his treatise of animals, nor by Arabian writers." In reply to this we may observe, (1.) that the *reem* is mentioned in the Scriptures only in seven places (see above), showing, at least, that it was probably an animal not *very well known* in that country, or it would have been oftener alluded to. (2.) It is not clear that in those places it is "everywhere mentioned with other animals common to that country," as in the passage before us there is no allusion to any domestic animal; nor is there in Num. xxiii. 22; xxiv. 8; Ps. xcii. 10. In Ps. xxii. 21, they are mentioned in the same verse with "lions;" in Ps. xxix. 6, in connexion with "calves;" and in Isa. xxxiv. 7, with bullocks and bulls—wild animals inhabiting Idumea. But the entire account is that of an animal that was untamed, and that was evidently a foreign animal. (3.) What evidence is there that the Hebrews were well acquainted, as Prof. R. supposes, with the *wild buffalo*? Is this animal an inhabitant of Palestine? Is it "everywhere" mentioned in the Scriptures? Is there any more evidence from the Bible that they were acquainted with it than with the rhinoceros? (4.) It cannot be reasonably supposed that the Hebrews were so unacquainted with the rhinoceros that there could be no allusion to it in their writings. This animal was found in Egypt and in the adjacent countries, and whoever was the writer of the book of Job, there are frequent references in the book to what was well known in Egypt; and at all events the Hebrews

had lived too long in Egypt, and had had too much intercourse with the Egyptians, to be wholly ignorant of the existence and general character of an animal well known there, and we, *in fact*, find just about as frequent mention of it as we should on this supposition. It does not seem, therefore, to admit of reasonable doubt that the rhinoceros is referred to in the passage before us. This animal, next to the elephant, is the most powerful of animals. It is usually about twelve feet long; from six to seven feet high; and the circumference of its body is nearly equal to its length. Its bulk of body, therefore, is about that of the elephant. Its head is furnished with a horn, growing from the snout, sometimes three and a half feet long. This horn is erect, and perpendicular to the bone on which it stands, and it has thus a greater purchase or power than it could have in any other position.—*Bruce*. Occasionally it is found with a double horn, one above the other, though this is not common. The horn is entirely solid, formed of the hardest bony substance, and so firmly growing on the upper maxillary bone as seemingly to make but a part of it, and so powerful as to justify all the allusions in the Scriptures to the horn of the *reem*. The skin of this animal is naked, rough, and knotty, lying upon the body in folds, and so thick as to turn the edge of a scimitar, or to resist a musket-ball. The legs are short, strong, and thick, and the hoofs divided into three parts, each pointing forward. It is a native of the deserts of Asia and Africa, and is usually found in the extensive forests which are frequented by the elephant and the lion. It has never been domesticated; never employed in agricultural purposes; and thus, as well as in size and strength, accords with the account which is given of the animal in the passage before us. The following engraving will furnish a good illustration of this animal:

10 Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee?

11 Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?



¶ *Be willing to serve thee.* In ploughing and harrowing thy land, and conveying home the harvest, ver. 12. ¶ *Or abide by thy crib.* As the ox will. The word here used (לָלַךְ) means, properly, to pass the night; and then to abide, remain, dwell. There is propriety in retaining here the original meaning of the word, and the sense is, can he be domesticated or tamed? The rhinoceros never has been.

10. *Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow?* That is, with the common traces or cords which are employed in binding oxen to the plough. ¶ *Or will he harrow the valleys after thee?* The word "valleys" here is used to denote such ground as was capable of being ploughed or har-

rowed. Hills and mountains could not thus be cultivated, though the spade was in common use in planting the vine there, and even in preparing them for seed. Isa. vii. 25. The phrase "after thee" indicates that the custom of driving cattle in harrowing then was the same as that practised now with oxen, when the person who employs them goes in advance of them. It shows that they were entirely under subjection, and it is here implied that the reem could not be thus tamed.

11. *Wilt thou trust him?* As thou dost the ox. In the domestic animals great confidence is of necessity placed, and the reliance on the fidelity of the ox and the horse is not usually misplaced. The idea here is, that the

12 Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather it into thy barn?

13 Gavest thou the goodly

unicorn could not be so tamed that important interests could be safely intrusted to him. ¶ *Because his strength is great?* Wilt thou consider his strength as a reason why important interests might be intrusted to him? The strength of the ox, the camel, the horse, and the elephant was a reason why their aid was sought by man to do what he could not himself do. The idea is, that man could not make use of the same reason for employing the rhinoceros. ¶ *Wilt thou leave thy labor to him?* Or, rather, the *avails* of thy labor—the harvest.

12. *Wilt thou believe him?* That is, wilt thou trust him with the productions of the field? The idea is, that he was an untamed and unsubdued animal. He could not be governed, like the camel or the ox. If the sheaves of the harvest were laid on him, there would be no certainty that he would convey them where the farmer wished them. ¶ *And gather it into thy barn?* Or, rather, “to thy threshing-floor,” for so the word here used (רָבַח) means. It was not common to gather a harvest into a barn, but it was usually collected on a hard-trod place, and there threshed and winnowed. For the use of the word, see Ruth iii. 2; Judges vi. 37; Num. xviii. 30; Isa. xxi. 10.

13. Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks? In the previous verses the appeal had been to the wild and untameable animals of the desert. In the prosecution of the argument, it was natural to allude to the feathered tribes which resided there also, and which were distinguished for their strength or fleetness of wing, as proof of the wisdom and the superintending providence of God. The idea is, that these animals, far away from the abodes of man, where it could not be pretended that man had anything to do with their training, had habits and instincts peculiar to themselves, which showed great

wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the ostrich?

<sup>1</sup> or, the feathers of the stork and ostrich.

variety in the divine plans, and at the same time consummate wisdom. The appeal in the following verses (13—18) is to the remarkable habits of the ostrich, as illustrating the wisdom and the superintending providence of God. There has been very great variety in the translation of this verse, and it is important to ascertain its real meaning in order to know whether there is any allusion here to the peacock, or whether it refers wholly to the ostrich. The LXX did not understand the passage, and a part of the words they endeavored to translate, but the others are retained without any attempt to explain them. Their version is, Πτέρυξ τερπομένην νεέλασσα, τὴν συλλαβὴν ἀσίδα καὶ νίσσα—“the wing of the exulting Neelassa if she conceives [or comprehends] the Asis and Nessa.” Jerome renders it, “The wing of the ostrich is like the wings of the falcon and the hawk.” Schultens renders it, “The wing of the ostrich is exulting: but is it the wing and the plumage of the stork?” He enumerates no less than twenty different interpretations of the passage. Herder renders it,

“A wing with joyous cry is uplifted yonder;  
Is it the wing and feather of the ostrich?”

Umbreit renders it,

“The wing of the ostrich, which lifts itself joyfully,  
Does it not resemble the tail and feather of the stork?”

Rosenmüller renders it,

“The wing of the ostrich exults!  
Truly its wing and plumage is like that of the stork!”

Prof. Lee renders it, “Wilt thou confide in the exulting of the wings of the ostrich? Or in her choice feathers and head-plumage, when she leaveth her eggs to the earth,” &c. So Coverdale renders it, “The ostrich (whose feathers are fairer than the wings of the sparrowhawk), when he hath laid his eggs upon the ground, he breedeth them in the

dust, and forgetteth them." In none of these versions, and in none that I have examined, except that of Luther and the common English version, is there any allusion to the *peacock*; and amidst all the variety of the rendering, and all the difficulty of the passage, there is a common sentiment that the *ostrich* alone is referred to as the particular subject of the description. It is certain that the description proceeds with reference only to the habits of the *ostrich*; and it is very evident to my mind, that in the whole passage there is no allusion whatever to the *peacock*. Neither the scope of the passage, nor the words employed, it is believed, will admit of such a reference. There is great difficulty in the Hebrew text, which no one has been able fully to explain, but it is sufficiently clear to make it manifest that the *ostrich*, and not the *peacock*, is the subject of the appeal. The word which is rendered *peacock*, רֶנָּן—*rēnānīm*, is derived from רָנָן—*rānān*, to give forth a tremulous and stridulous sound; and then to give forth the voice in vibrations; to shake or trill the voice; and then, as in lamentation or joy, the voice is often given forth in that manner, the word comes to mean to utter cries of joy, Isa. xii. 6, xxxv. 6; and also cries of lamentation or mourning, Lam. ii. 19. The prevailing sense of the word in the Scriptures is to rejoice; to shout for joy; to exult. The name is here given to the bird referred to, evidently from the sound which it made, and probably from its exulting or joyful cry. The word does not elsewhere occur in the Scriptures as applicable to a bird, and there is no reason whatever, either from its etymology, or from the connexion in which it is found here, to suppose that it refers to the *peacock*. Another reason is suggested by Scheutzer (Phys. Sac. in loc.) why the *peacock* cannot be intended here. It is, that the *peacock* is originally an East Indian fowl, and that it was imported at comparatively a late period in the Jewish history, and was doubtless unknown in the time of Job. In 1 Kings x. 22, and 2 Chron. ix. 21, it appears that *peacocks* were among the remarkable productions of distant coun-

tries that were imported for use or luxury by Solomon, a fact which would not have occurred had they been common in the patriarchal times. To these reasons to show that the *peacock* is not referred to here, Bochart, whose chapters on the subject deserve a careful attention (Hieroz. P. ii. L. ii. c. xvi. xvii.), has added the following:—(1.) That if the *peacock* had been intended here, the allusion would not have been so brief. Of so remarkable a bird there would have been an extended description, as there is of the *ostrich*, and of the unicorn and the horse. If the allusion is to the *peacock*, it is by a bare mention of the name, and by no argument, as in other cases, from the habits and instincts of the fowl. (2.) The word which is here used as a description of the bird referred to, רֶנָּן—*rēnānīm*, derived from the musical properties of the bird, is by no means applicable to the *peacock*. It is of all fowls, perhaps, least distinguished for beauty of voice. (3.) The property ascribed to the fowl here of "exulting in the wing," by no means agrees with the *peacock*. The glory and beauty of that bird is in the tail, and not in the wing. Yet the wing is here, from some cause, particularly specified. Bochart has demonstrated at great length, and with entire clearness, that the *peacock* was a foreign fowl, and that it must have been unknown in Judea and Arabia, as it was in Greece and Rome, at a period long after the time in which the book of Job is commonly supposed to have been written. The proper translation of the Hebrew here, then, would be, "The wing of the exulting fowls moves joyfully"—נָּסַח. The attention seems to be directed to the wing, as being lifted up, or as vibrating with rapidity, or as being triumphant in its movement in eluding the pursuer. It is not its beauty particularly that attracts the attention, but its exulting, joyful, triumphant appearance. ¶ Or wings and feathers unto the *ostrich*? Marg., "or, the feathers of the stork and *ostrich*." Most commentators have despaired of making any sense out of the Hebrew in this place, and there have been almost as many

conjectures as there have been expositors. The Hebrew is, *הַכַּנף וְהָעֶרְוָה*. A literal translation of it would be, "Is it the wing of the stork, and the plumage," or feathers? The object seems to be, to institute a comparison of some kind between the ostrich and the stork. This comparison, it would seem, relates partly to the wings and plumage of the two birds, and partly to their habits and instincts—though the latter point of comparison appears to be couched in the mere *name*. So far as I can understand the passage, the comparison relates *first* to the wings and plumage. The point of vision is that of the *sudden appearance* of the ostrich with exulting wing, and the attention is directed to it as in the bounding speed of its movements when in rapid flight. In this view the usual *name* is not given to the bird—*יָצִיר*, Isa. xiii. 21, xxxiv. 13, xliii. 20; Jer. l. 39, but merely the name of fowls making a stridulous or whizzing sound—*קָקִים*. The question is then asked, whether it has the wing and plumage of the stork—evidently implying that the wing of the stork might be supposed to be adapted to such a flight, but that it was remarkable that *without* such wings the ostrich was able to outstrip even the fleetest animal. The question is designed to turn the attention to the fact that the ostrich accomplishes its flight in this remarkable manner *without* being endowed with wings like the stork, which is capable of sustaining by its wings a long and rapid flight. The other point of the comparison seems couched in the *name* given to the stork, and the design is to contrast the habits of the ostrich with those of this bird—particularly in reference to their care for their young. The name given to the stork is *חֲסִידָה*—*hhasida*, meaning literally *the pious*, a name usually given to it—*avis pia*, from its tenderness towards its young—a virtue for which it was celebrated by the ancients. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* x.; Ælian, *Hist. An.* 3, 23. On the contrary, the Arabs call the ostrich the *impious* or *ungodly* bird, on account of its neglect and cruelty to-

wards its young. The *fact* that the ostrich thus neglects its young is dwelt upon in the passage before us (vs. 14—17), and in this respect she is placed in strong contrast with the stork. The verse then, I suppose, may be rendered thus:

A wing of exulting fowls moves joyfully!  
Is it the wing and the plumage of the pious bird?"

meaning that both in regard to the wing and the habits of the two there was a strong contrast, and yet designing to show that what seems to be a defect in the size and vigor of the wing, and what seems to be stupid forgetfulness of the bird in regard to its young, is proof of the wisdom of the Creator, who has so made it as to be able to outstrip the fleetest horse, and to be adapted to its shy and timid mode of life in the desert. The ostrich, whose principal characteristics are beautifully and strikingly detailed in this passage in Job, is a native of the torrid regions of Arabia and Africa. It is the largest of the feathered tribes, and is the connecting link between quadrupeds and fowls. It has the general properties and outlines of a bird, and yet retains many of the marks of the quadruped. In appearance, the ostrich resembles the camel, and is almost as tall; and in the East is called "the camel-bird." (*Cubnet.*) It is covered with a plumage that resembles hair more nearly than feathers; and its internal parts bear as near a resemblance to those of the quadruped as of the bird creation. *Goldsmith.* See also Poirer's *Travels in the Barbary States*, as quoted by Rosenmüller, *Alte u. neue Morgenland*, No. 770. A full description is there given of the appearance and habits of the ostrich. Its head and bill resemble those of a duck; the neck may be compared with that of the swan, though it is much longer; the legs and thighs resemble those of a hen, but are fleshy and large. The end of the foot is cloven, and has two very large toes, which, like the leg, are covered with scales. The height of the ostrich is usually seven feet from the head to the ground; but from the back it is only four, so that the head and the neck are

about three feet long. From the head to the end of the tail, when the neck is stretched in a right line, the length is seven feet. One of the wings with the feathers spread out is three feet in length. At the end of the wing there is a species of spur, almost like the quill of a porcupine. It is an inch long, and is hollow, and of a bony substance. The plumage is generally white and black, though some of them are said to be gray. There are no feathers on the sides of the thighs, nor under the wings. It has not, like most birds, feathers of various kinds, but they are all bearded with detached hairs or filaments, without consistence and reciprocal adherence. The feathers of the ostrich are almost as soft as down, and are therefore wholly unfit for flying, or to defend the body from external injury. The feathers of other birds have the webs broader on one side than the other, but those of the ostrich have the shaft exactly in the middle. In other birds, the filaments that compose the feathers of the wings are firmly attached to each other, or are *hooked together*, so that they are adapted to catch and resist the air; on those of the ostrich no such attachments are found. The consequence is, that they cannot oppose to the air a suitable resistance, as is the case with other birds, and are therefore incapable of flying, and, in fact, never mount on the wing. The wing is used (see Notes on ver. 18) only to *balance* the bird, and to aid it in *running*. The great size of the bird—weighing seventy-five or eighty pounds—would require an immense power of wing to elevate it in the air, and it has, therefore, been furnished with the means of surpassing all other animals in the rapidity with which it runs, so that it may escape its pursuers. The ostrich is made to live in the wilderness, and it was called

by the ancients “a lover of the deserts.” It is shy and timorous in no common degree, and avoids the cultivated fields, and the abodes of man, and retreats into the utmost recesses of the desert. In those dreary wastes its subsistence is the few tufts of coarse grass which are scattered here and there, but it will eat almost anything that comes in its way. It is the most voracious of animals, and will devour leather, glass, hair, iron, stones, or anything that is given. Valisnieri found the first stomach filled with a quantity of incongruous substances; grass, nuts, cords, stones, glass, brass, copper, iron, tin, lead, and wood, and among the rest, a piece of stone that weighed more than a pound. It would seem that the ostrich is obliged to fill up the great capacity of its stomach in order to be at ease; but that, nutritious substances not occurring, it pours in whatever is at hand to supply the void. The flesh of the ostrich was forbidden by the laws of Moses to be eaten (Lev. xi. 13), but it is eaten by some of the savage nations of Africa, who hunt them for their flesh, which they regard as a dainty. The principal value of the ostrich, however, and the principal reason why it is hunted, is in the long feathers that compose the wing and the tail, and which are used so extensively for ornaments. The ancients used these plumes in their helmets; the ladies in the East, as well as in the West, use them to decorate their persons, and they have been extensively employed also as badges of mourning on hearses. The Arabians assert that the ostrich never drinks, and the chosen place of its habitation—the waste, sandy desert—seems to confirm the assertion. As the ostrich, in the passage before us, is contrasted with the stork, the accompanying illustrations will serve to explain the passage.

15 And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them.

16 She is hardened <sup>c</sup> against

her young ones, as though *they were* not hers: her labour is in vain without fear;

c La. 4. 3.

more frequently absent; but she is accustomed regularly to return at night, and carefully broods over her eggs. See Le Vaillant, *Travels in the Interior of Africa*, ii. 209, 305. It is true also that the parent bird wanders sometimes far from the place where the eggs are deposited, and forgets the place; and in this case, if another nest of eggs is seen, she is not concerned whether they are her own or not, for she is not endowed with the power of distinguishing between her own eggs and those of another. This fact seems to have given rise to all the fables stated by the Arabic writers about the stupidity of the ostrich; about her leaving her eggs; and about her disposition to sit on the eggs of others. Bochart has collected many of these opinions from the Arabic writers, among which are the following: Alkazuinius says, "They say that no bird is more foolish than the ostrich, for while it forsakes its own eggs, it sits on the eggs of others; whence the proverb, Every animal loves its own young except the ostrich." Ottomanus says, "Every animal loves its own progeny except the ostrich. But that pertains only to the male. For although the common proverb imputes folly to the female, yet with her folly she loves her young, and feeds them, and teaches them to fly, the same as other animals." Damir, an Arabic writer, says, "When the ostrich goes forth from her nest, that she may seek food, if she finds the egg of another ostrich, she sits on that, and forgets her own. And when driven away by hunters, she never returns; whence it is that she is described as foolish, and that the proverb in regard to her has originated." ¶ *And warmth them in dust.* The idea which was evidently in the mind of the translators in this passage was, that the ostrich left her eggs in the dust to be hatched by the heat of the sun. This is not correct, and is not necessarily implied in the

Hebrew, though undoubtedly the heat of the sand is made to contribute to the process of hatching the egg, and allows the parent bird to be absent longer from her nest than birds in colder climates. This seems to be all that is implied in the passage.

15. *And forgetteth that the foot may crush them.* She lays her eggs in the sand, and not as most birds do, in nests made of branches of trees, or on the crags of rocks, where they would be inaccessible, *as if* she was forgetful of the fact that the wild beast might pass along and crush them. She often wanders away from them, also, and does not stay near them to guard them, as most parent birds do, *as if* she were unmindful of the danger to which they might be exposed when she was absent. The *object* of all this seems to be, to call the attention to the *peculiarity* in the natural history of this bird, and to observe that there were laws and arrangements in regard to it which seemed to show that she was deprived of wisdom, and yet that everything was so ordered as to prove that she was under the care of the Almighty. The *great variety* in the laws pertaining to the animal kingdom, and especially their want of resemblance to what would have occurred to man, seems to give the peculiar force and point to the argument here used.

16. *She is hardened against her young ones.* The obvious meaning of this passage, which is a fair translation of the Hebrew, is, that the ostrich is destitute of natural affection for her young; or that she treats them as if she had not the usual natural affection manifested in the animal creation. This sentiment also occurs in Lam. iv. 3, "The daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness." This opinion is controverted by Buffon, but seems fully sustained by those who have most attentively observed the habits of the ostrich. Dr.

17 Because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither <sup>f</sup> hath he imparted to her understanding.

f c. 35. 11.

Shaw, as quoted by Paxton, and in Robinson's Calmet, says, "On the least noise or trivial occasion, she forsakes her eggs or her young ones, to which, perhaps, she never returns; or if she does, it may be too late either to restore life to the one, or to preserve the lives of the others." "Agreeably to this account," says Paxton, "the Arabs meet sometimes with whole nests of these eggs undisturbed, some of which are sweet and good, and others addled and corrupted; others, again, have their young ones of different growths, according to the time it may be presumed they have been forsaken by the dam. They oftener meet a few of the little ones, not bigger than well-grown pullets, half-starved, straggling and moaning about like so many distressed orphans for their mothers." ¶ *Her labor is in vain without fear.* Herder renders this, "In vain is her travail, but she regards it not." The idea in the passage seems to be this: that the ostrich has not that *apprehension* or *provident care* for her young which other birds have. It does not mean that she is an animal remarkably bold and courageous, for the contrary is the fact, and she is, according to the Arabian writers, timid to a proverb; but that she has nothing of the anxious solicitude for her young which others seem to have,—the dread that they may be in want, or in danger, which leads them, often at the peril of their own lives, to provide for and defend them.

17. *Because God hath deprived her of wisdom, &c.* That is, he has not imparted to her the wisdom which has been conferred on other animals. The meaning is, that all this remarkable arrangement, which distinguished the ostrich so much from other animals, was to be traced to God. It was not the result of chance; it could not be pretended that it was by a human arrangement, but it was the result of

18 What time she lifteth up herself on high, she scorneth the horse and his rider.

divine appointment. Even in this apparent destitution of wisdom, there were reasons which had led to this appointment, and the care and good providence of God could be seen in the preservation of the animal. Particularly, though apparently so weak, and timid, and unwise, the ostrich had a noble bearing (ver. 18), and when aroused, would scorn the fleetest horse in the pursuit, and show that she was distinguished for properties that were expressive of the goodness of God towards her, and of his care over her.

18. *What time she lifteth up herself on high.* In the previous verses reference had been made to the fact that in some important respects the ostrich was inferior to other animals, or had peculiar laws in regard to its habits and preservation. Here the attention is called to the fact that, notwithstanding its inferiority in some respects, it had properties such as to command the highest admiration. Its lofty carriage, the rapidity of its flight, and the proud scorn with which it would elude the pursuit of the fleetest coursers, were all things that showed that God had so endowed it as to furnish proof of his wisdom. The phrase "what time she lifteth up herself," refers to the fact that she raises herself for her rapid flight. It does not mean that she would mount on her wings, for this the ostrich cannot do; but to the fact that this timid and cowardly bird would, when danger was near, rouse herself, and assume a lofty courage and bearing. The word here translated "lifteth up" (תָּקַם) means, properly, *to lash, to whip*, as a horse, to increase its speed, and is here supposed by Gesenius to be used as denoting that the ostrich by flapping her wings lashes herself up as it were to her course. All the ancient interpretations, however, as well as the common English version, render it as if it were but another form of the word רוּם, *rûm*, *to raise oneself*



up, or to rise up, as if the ostrich aroused herself up for her flight. Herder renders it, "At once she is up, and urges herself forward." Taylor (in Calmet) renders it,

"Yet at the time she haughtily assumes courage;

She scorneth the horse and his rider."

The leading idea is, that she rouses herself to escape her pursuer; she lifts up her head and body, and spreads her wings, and then bids defiance to anything to overtake her. ¶ *She scorneth the horse and his rider.* In the pursuit. That is, she runs faster than the fleetest horse, and easily escapes. The extraordinary rapidity of the ostrich has always been celebrated, and it is well known that she can easily outstrip the fleetest horse. Its swiftness is mentioned by Xenophon, in his *Anabasis*; for, speaking of the desert of Arabia, he says, that ostriches are frequently seen there; that none could overtake them; and that horsemen who pursued them were obliged soon to give over, "for they escaped far away, making use both of their feet to run, and of their wings, when expanded, as a sail, to waft them along." Marmelius, as quoted by Bochart (see above), speaking of a remarkable kind of horses, says, "that in Africa, Egypt, and Arabia, there is but one species of that kind which they call the Arabian, and that those are produced only in the deserts of Arabia. Their velocity is wonderful; nor is there any better evidence of their remarkable swiftness, than is furnished when they pursue the camel-bird." It is a common sentiment of the Arabs, Bochart remarks, that there is no animal which can overcome the ostrich in its course. Dr. Shaw says, "Notwithstanding the stupidity of this animal, its Creator hath amply provided for its safety by endowing it with extraordinary swiftness, and a surprising apparatus for escaping from its enemy. 'They, when they raise themselves up for flight, laugh at the horse and his rider.' They afford him an opportunity only of admiring at a distance the extraordinary agility, and the stateliness likewise of their motions, the richness of their plumage, and the great propriety there

was in ascribing to them *an expanded quivering wing*. Nothing, certainly, can be more entertaining than such a sight; the wings, by their rapid but unwearied vibrations, equally serving them for sails and for oars; while their feet, no less assisting in conveying them out of sight, are no less insensible of fatigue." *Travels*, 8vo, vol. ii. p. 343, as quoted by Noyes. The same representation is confirmed by the writer of a voyage to Senegal, who says, "She sets off at a hard gallop; but after being excited a little, she expands her wings as if to catch the wind, and abandons herself to a speed so great, that she seems not to touch the ground. I am persuaded she would leave far behind the swiftest English courser." *Rob. Calmet*. Buffon also admits that the ostrich runs faster than the horse. These unexceptionable testimonies completely vindicate the assertion of the inspired writer. The proofs and illustrations here furnished at considerable length are designed to show that the statements here made in the book of Job are such as are confirmed by all the investigations in Natural History since the time the book was written. If the statements are to be regarded as an indication of the progress made in the science of Natural History at the time when Job lived, they prove that the observations in regard to this animal had been extensive, and were surprisingly accurate. They show that the minds of sages at that time had been turned with much interest to this branch of science, and that they were able to describe the habits of animals with an accuracy which would do the highest credit to Pliny or to Buffon. If, however, the account here is to be regarded as the mere result of inspiration, or as the language of God speaking and describing what *he* had done, then the account furnishes us with an interesting proof of the inspiration of the book. Its minute accuracy is confirmed by all the subsequent inquiries into the habits of the animal referred to, and shows that the statement is based on simple truth. The general remark may here be made, that all the notices in the Bible of the subjects of science — which are, indeed, mostly

## 19 Hast thou given the horse

casual and incidental—are such as are confirmed by the investigations which science in the various departments makes. Of what other ancient book but *the Bible* can this remark be made?

19. *Hast thou given the horse strength?*

The incidental allusion to the horse in comparison with the ostrich in the previous verse seems to have suggested this magnificent description of this noble animal—a description which has never been surpassed or equalled. The *horse* is an animal so well known, that a particular description of it is here unnecessary. The *only* thing which is required is an explanation of the phrases here used, and a confirmation of the particular qualities here attributed to the war-horse, for the description here is evidently that of the horse as he appears in war, or as about to plunge into the midst of a battle. The description which comes the nearest to this before us, is that furnished in the well-known and exquisite passage of Virgil, *Georg.*, iii. 84, *seq.*

—“Tum, si qua sonum procul arma dedere,  
Stare loco nescit, micat auribus, et tremit artus,  
Collectumque premens volvit sub naribus ignem.  
Densa juba, et dextro jactata recumbat in arno.  
At duplex agitur, per lumbos spina; cavatque  
Tellurem, et solido graviter sonat ungula  
cornu.”

“But at the clash of arms, his ear afar  
Drinks the deep sound, and vibrates to the  
war;

Flames from each nostril roll in gathered  
stream,

His quivering limbs with restless motion  
gleam,

O'er his right shoulder, floating full and fair,  
Sweeps his thick mane, and spreads his pomp  
of hair;

Swift works his double spine; and earth  
around

Rings to his solid hoof that wears the  
ground.”

SOTHEBY.

Many of the circumstances here enumerated have a remarkable resemblance to the description in Job. Other descriptions and correspondencies between this passage and the classic writers may be seen at length in Bochart, *Hieroz.*, P. i. L. i. c. viii.; in Scheutzer, *Physica Sacra*, in *loc.*; and in the *Scriptorum variorum Sylloge* (*Vermischte Schriften*,

strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?

Goetting. 1782) of Godofr. Less. A full account of the habits of the horse is also furnished by Michaelis in his “Dissertation on the most ancient history of horses and horse-breeding,” &c., Appendix to Art. clixvi. of the Commentary of the Laws of Moses, vol. ii. According to the results of the investigations of Michaelis, Arabia was not, as is commonly supposed, the native country of the horse, but its origin is rather to be sought in Egypt; and in the account which is given of the riches of Job, ch. i. 3, xlii. 12, it is remarkable that the *horse* is not mentioned. It is, therefore, in a high degree probable that the horse was not known in his time as a domestic animal, and that, in his country at least, it was employed chiefly in war. ¶ *Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?* There seems to be something incongruous in the idea of making *thunder* the *clothing* of the neck of a horse, and there has been considerable diversity in the exposition of the passage. There is evidently some allusion to the *mane*, but exactly in what respect is not agreed. The LXX render it, “Hast thou clothed his neck with terror?”—φόβον. Jerome refers it to the *neighing* of the horse—*aut circumdabis collo ejus hinnitum*. Prof. Lee renders it, “Clothest thou his neck with scorn?” Herder, “And clothed its neck with its flowing mane.” Umbreit, “Hast thou clothed his neck with loftiness?” Noyes, “Hast thou clothed his neck with its quivering mane?” Schultens, *convestis cervicem ejus tremore alacri*—“with rapid quivering;” and Dr. Good, “with the thunder-flash.” In this variety of interpretation, it is easy to perceive that the common impression has been that the *mane* is in some way referred to, and that the allusion is not so much to a *sound* as of thunder, as to some *motion* of the mane that attracted attention. The mane adds much to the majesty and beauty of the horse, and perhaps it was in some way decorated by the ancients so as to set it off with increased beauty. The word which is here

20 Canst thou make him afraid  
as a grasshopper? the glory of his

used, and which is rendered *thunder* (רָעַם), is from the verb רָעַם, *râ'm*, meaning to rage, to roar, as applied to the sea, Ps. xcvi. 11, xcvi. 8, and then to thunder. It has also the idea of *trembling* or *quaking*, Ezek. xxvii. 35, and also of provoking to anger, 1 Sam. i. 6. The verb and the noun are more commonly referred to *thunder* than anything else, Job xxxvii. 4, 5, xl. 9; 2 Sam. xxii. 14; 1 Sam. ii. 10, vii. 10; Ps. xviii. 13, xxix. 3, lxxvii. 18, civ. 7; Isa. xxix. 6. A full investigation of the meaning of the passage may be seen in Bochart, *Hieroz.* P. i. Lib. ii. c. viii. It seems to me to be very difficult to determine its meaning, and none of the explanations given are quite satisfactory. The word used requires us to understand the appearance of the neck of the horse as having some resemblance to *thunder*, but in what respect is not quite so apparent. It may be this: the description of the war-horse is that of an animal fitted to inspire terror. He is caparisoned for battle; impatient of restraint; rushing forward into the thickest of the fight; tearing up the earth; breathing fire from his nostrils; and it was not unnatural, therefore, to compare him with the tempest. The majestic neck, with the erect and shaking mane, is likened to the thunder of the tempest that shakes everything, and that gives so much majesty and fearfulness to the gathering storm, and the description seems to be this—that his very neck is fitted to produce awe and alarm, like the thunder of the tempest. We are required, therefore, it seems to me, to adhere to the proper meaning of the word, and though in the coolness of criticism there may appear to be something incongruous in the application of *thunder* to the neck of the horse, yet it might not appear to be so if we saw such a war-horse—and if the thought, not an unnatural one, should strike us, that in majesty and fury he bore a strong resemblance to an approaching tempest.

20. Canst thou make him afraid as a

nostrils <sup>1</sup> is terrible.

<sup>1</sup> *terrors.*

*grasshopper?* Or, rather, as a locust—*קַרְדִּיָּה*. This is the word which is commonly applied to the locust considered as *gregarious*, or as appearing in great numbers (from קָרָה, *to be multiplied*). On the variety of the species of locusts, see Bochart, *Hieroz.* P. ii. Lib. iv. c. 1, *seq.* The Hebrew word here rendered "make afraid" (רָעַם) means, properly, *to be moved*, *to be shaken*, and hence to tremble, to be afraid. In Hiphil, the form used here, it means to cause to tremble, to shake; and then *to cause to leap*, as a horse; and the idea here is, Canst thou cause the horse, an animal so large and powerful, to leap with the agility of a locust? See Gesenius, *Ler.* The allusion here is to the leaping or moving of the locusts as they advance in the appearance of squadrons or troops; but the comparison is not so much that of a *single* horse to a *single* locust, as of *cavalry* or a company of war-horses to an army of locusts; and the point of comparison turns on the elasticity or agility of the motion of cavalry advancing to the field of battle. The sense is, that *God* could cause that rapid and beautiful movement in animals so large and powerful as the horse, but that it was wholly beyond the power of man to effect it. It is quite common in the East to compare a horse with a locust, and travellers have spoken of the remarkable resemblance between the *heads* of the two. This comparison occurs also in the Bible. See Joel ii. 4, "The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen so shall they run." Rev. ix. 7. The Italians from this resemblance call the locust *cavaletta*, or little horse. Sir W. Ouseley says, "Zakaria Calvini divides the locusts into two classes, like horsemen and footmen, 'mounted and pedestrian.'" Niebuhr says that he heard from a Bedouin near Bassorah, a particular comparison of the locust with other animals; but he thought it a mere fancy of the Arabs, till he heard it repeated at

21 He <sup>1</sup> paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in *his* strength: he goeth <sup>2</sup> on to meet the <sup>2</sup> armed men.

22 He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword.

<sup>1</sup> or, His feet *dig*. g Je. 8. 6. <sup>2</sup> *armour*.

Bagdad. He compared the head of a locust to that of a horse, the breast to that of a lion, the feet to those of a camel, the belly with that of a serpent, the tail with that of a scorpion, and the feelers with the hair of a virgin. See *Pict. Bib.* on Joel ii. 4. ¶ *The glory of his nostrils is terrible*. Marg., as in Heb., *terrors*. That is, it is fitted to inspire terror or awe. The reference is to the wide-extended and fiery-looking nostrils of the horse, when animated and impatient for action. So Lucretius, L. v.:

"Et fremitum patulis sub naribus edit ad arma."

So Virgil, *Georg.* iii. 85:

"Collectumque premens volvitur sub naribus ignem."

Claudian, in iv. *Consulatu Honorii*:

"Ignescunt patulæ nares."

21. *He paweth in the valley*. Marg., "or, His feet *dig*." The marginal reading is more in accordance with the Hebrew. The reference is to the well-known fact of the *pawing* of the horse with his feet, as if he would dig up the ground. The same idea occurs in Virgil, as quoted above:

"Cavatque

Tellurem, et solido graviter sonat ungula cornu."

Also in Apollonius, L. iii. *Argonauticon*.

ὅτε δ' ἄρ' ἵππος ἔππος, ἐξελδόμενος πολέμιον,  
Σκαρθμὺ ἐπὶ χρεμέθων κρούει πέδον.

"As a war-horse, impatient for the battle, Neighing, beats the ground with his hoofs."

¶ *He goeth on to meet the armed men*. Marg., *armour*. The margin is in accordance with the Hebrew, but still the idea is substantially the same. The horse rushes on furiously against the weapons of war.

22. *He mocketh at fear*. He laughs

23 The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield.

24 He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage; neither believeth he that *it is* the sound of the trumpet.

at that which is fitted to intimidate; that is, he is not afraid. ¶ *Neither turneth he back from the sword*. He rushes on it without fear. Of the fact here stated, and the accuracy of the description, there can be no doubt.

23. *The quiver rattleth against him*. The quiver was a case made for containing arrows: It was usually slung over the shoulder, so that it could be easily reached to draw out an arrow. Warriors on horseback, as well as on foot, fought with bows and arrows, as well as with swords and spears; and the idea here is, that the war-horse bore upon himself these instruments of war. The rattling of the quiver was caused by the fact that the arrows were thrown somewhat loosely into the case or the quiver, and that in the rapid motion of the warrior they were shaken against each other. Thus Virgil, *Æn.* ix. 660: — "Pharetramque fugâ sensere sonantem."

*Silius*, L. 12:

"Plena tenet et resonante pharetra."

And again:

"Turba ruunt stridentque sagittiferi coryti."

So Homer (*Iliad*, A. 45), when speaking of Apollo:

τόξ' ὤμοισιν ἔχων, ἀμφηρέφεια τε φαρέτῃν  
ἔκλαγξαν δ' ἄρ' οἱστοὶ ἐπ' ὤμων χρωμένοιο.

See Schentzer's *Phys. Sac.*, in *loc*.

24. *He swalloweth the ground*. He seems as if he would absorb the earth. That is, he strikes his feet into it with such fierceness, and raises up the dust in his prancing, as if he would devour it. This figure is unusual with us, but it is common in the Arabic. See Schultens, in *loc.*, and Bochart, *Hieroz.* P. i. L. ii. c. viii. pp. 143—145. So Statius:

"Stare loco nescit, pereunt vestigia mille  
Ante fugam, absenteque ferit gravis ungula campum."

25 He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains and the shouting.

\* Th' impatient courser pants in every vein,  
And pawing seems to beat the distant plain;  
Hills, vales, and floods appear already  
cross'd,

And ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost."

POPE.

¶ *Neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet.* This translation by no means conveys the meaning of the original. The true sense is probably expressed by Umbreit, "He standeth not still when the trumpet soundeth;" that is, he becomes impatient; he no longer *confides* in the voice of the rider and remains submissive, but he becomes excited by the martial clangor, and rushes into the midst of the battle. The Hebrew word which is employed (יָמַן) means, properly, to prop, stay, support; then to believe, to be firm, stable; and is that which is commonly used to denote an act of *faith*, or as meaning *believing*. But the original sense of the word is here to be retained, and then it refers to the fact that the impatient horse no longer stands still when the trumpet begins to sound for battle.

25. *He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha.* That is, "When the trumpet sounds, his voice is heard as if he said Aha—or said that he heard the sound calling him to the battle." The reference is to the impatient neighing of the war-horse about to rush into the conflict. ¶ *And he smelleth the battle afar off.* That is, he snuffs, as it were, for the slaughter. The reference is to the effect of an approaching army upon a spirited war-horse, as if he perceived the approach by the sense of smelling, and longed to be in the midst of the battle. ¶ *The thunder of the captains.* Literally, "the war-cry of the princes." The reference is to the loud voices of the leaders of the army commanding the hosts under them. In regard to the whole of this magnificent description of the war-horse, the reader may consult Bochart, *Hieroz.* P. i. L. ii. c. viii., where the phrases used are considered

26 Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the south?

and illustrated at length. The leading idea here is, that the war-horse evinced the wisdom and the power of God. His majesty, energy, strength, impatience for the battle, and spirit, were proofs of the greatness of him who had made him, and might be appealed to as illustrating his perfections. Much as men admire the noble horse, and much as they take pains to train him for the turf, or for battle, yet how seldom do they refer to it as illustrating the power and greatness of the Creator; and, it may be added, how seldom do they use the horse as if he were one of the grand and noble works of God!

26. *Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom?* The appeal here is to the hawk, because it is among the most rapid of the birds in its flight. The particular thing specified is its *flying*, and it is supposed that there was something peculiar in that which distinguished it from other birds. Whether it was in regard to its speed, to its manner of flying, or to its habits of flying at periodical seasons, may indeed be made a matter of inquiry, but it is clear that the particular thing in this bird which was adapted to draw the attention, and which evinced peculiarly the wisdom of God, was connected with its flight. The word here rendered *hawk* (יָ, *nētz*) is probably *generic*, and includes the various species of the falcon, or hawk tribe, as the jerr-falcon, the goshawk, the sparrow-hawk, the lanner, the sacre, the hobby, the kestrel, and the merlin. Not less than one hundred and fifty species of the hawk, it is said, have been described, but of these many are little known, and many of them differ from others only by very slight distinctions. They are birds of prey, and, as many of them are endowed with remarkable docility, they are trained for the diversions of *falconry*—which has been quite a science among sportsmen. The falcon, or hawk, is often distinguished for fleetness. One belonging to a Duke of Cleves, flew out

27 Doth the eagle mount up <sup>1</sup> at thy command, and make her nest on <sup>h</sup> high?

<sup>1</sup> by thy mouth.

¶ Jo. 49. 16. Ob. 4.

of Westphalia into Prussia in one day; and in the county of Norfolk (England), one was known to make a flight of nearly thirty miles in an hour. A falcon which belonged to Henry IV. of France, having escaped from Fontainebleau, was found twenty-fours after in Malta, the space traversed being not less than one thousand three hundred and fifty miles, being a velocity of about fifty-seven miles an hour, on the supposition that the bird was on the wing the whole time. It is this remarkable velocity which is here appealed to as a proof of the divine wisdom. God asks Job whether he could have formed these birds for their rapid flight. The wisdom and skill which has done this is evidently far above any that is possessed by man. ¶ And stretch her wings toward the south. Referring to the fact that the bird is migratory at certain seasons of the year. It is not here merely the *rapidity* of its flight which is referred to, but that remarkable instinct which leads the feathered tribes to seek more congenial climates at the approach of winter. In no way is this to be accounted for, except by the fact that God has so appointed it. This great law of the winged tribes is one of the clearest proofs of divine wisdom and agency.

27. Doth the eagle mount up at thy command? Marg., as in Heb., by thy mouth. The meaning is, that Job had not power to direct or order the eagle in his lofty flight. The eagle has always been celebrated for the height to which it ascends. When Ramond had reached the summit of Mount Perdu, the highest of the Pyrenees, he perceived no living creature but an eagle which passed above him, flying with inconceivable rapidity in direct opposition to a furious wind. *Edin. Ency.* "Of all animals, the eagle flies highest; and from thence the ancients have given him the epithet of *the bird of heaven*." *Goldsmith*. What is particularly worth

28 She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place.

remarking here is, the accuracy with which the descriptions in Job are made. If these are any indications of the progress of the knowledge of Natural History, that science could not have been then in its infancy. Just the things are adverted to here which all the investigations of subsequent ages have shown to characterize the classes of the feathered creation referred to. ¶ And make her nest on high. "The nest of the eagle is usually built in the most inaccessible cliff of the rock, and often shielded from the weather by some jutting crag that hangs over it." *Goldsmith*. "It is usually placed horizontally, in the hollow or fissure of some high and upright rock, and is constructed of sticks of five or six feet in length, interlaced with pliant twigs, and covered with layers of rushes, heath, or moss. Unless destroyed by some accident, it is supposed to suffice, with occasional repairs, for the same couple during their lives." *Edin. Ency.*

28. She dwelleth and abideth on the rock. "He rarely quits the mountains to descend into the plains. Each pair live in an insulated state, establishing their quarters on some high and precipitous cliff, at a respectful distance from others of the same species." *Edin. Ency.* They seem to occupy the same cliff, or place of abode, during their lives; and hence it is that they are represented as having a permanent abode on the lofty rock. In Damir it is said that the blind poet Besar, son of Jazidi, being asked if God would give him the choice to be an animal, what he would be, said that he would wish to be nothing else than an *alokab*, a species of the eagle, for they dwell in places to which no wild animal could have access. Schentzer, *Phys. Sac. in loc.* The word rendered "*abideth*" means commonly to *pass the night*, and here refers to the fact that the high rock was its constant abode or dwelling. By night as well as by day, the eagle had his home

29 From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off.

30 Her young ones also suck up blood: and where <sup>i</sup> the slain are, there is she.

<sup>i</sup> Mat. 24. 28. Lu. 17. 37.

there. ¶ *Upon the crag of the rock.* Heb., "Upon the tooth of the rock"—from the resemblance of the crag of a rock to a tooth.

29. *From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off.* "When far aloft, and no longer discernible by the human eye, such is the wonderful acuteness of its sight, that from the same elevation it will mark a hare, or even a smaller animal, and dart down on it with unerring aim." *Edin. Ency.* "Of all animals, the eagle has the quickest eye; but his sense of smelling is far inferior to that of the vulture. He never pursues, therefore, but in sight." *Goldsmith.* This power of sight was early known, and is celebrated by the ancients. Thus Homer, *Il. ρ.* ver. 674.

—ὥστ' αἰετὸς ὃν ῥά τε φασὶν  
ἰσχυτάτων ὀφρυσθῆναι ὑποουρανίων περὶ πτενῶν.

"As the eagle, of whom it is said, that it enjoys the keenest vision of all the fowls under heaven."

So Ælian, *H. L. i.* 32. Also Horace, *Serm. L. i.* Sat. 3:

— "Tam cernis acutūm  
Quām aut aquila, aut serpens Epidaurius."

The Arabic writers say that the eagle can see "four hundred parasangs." *Damir*, as quoted by Scheutzer. It is now ascertained that birds of prey search out or discern their food rather by the sight than the smell. No sooner does a camel fall and die on the plains of Arabia, than there may be seen in the far-distant sky apparently a black speck, which is soon discovered to be a vulture hastening to its prey. From that vast distance the bird, invisible to human eye, has seen the prey stretched upon the sand, and immediately commences towards it its rapid flight.

30. *Her young ones also suck up blood.* The word here used (שָׁוָה) occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures. It is supposed to mean, to sup up greedily; referring to the fact that the young ones of the eagle devour blood voraciously.

They are too feeble to devour the flesh, and hence they are fed on the blood of the victim. The strength of the eagle consists in the beak, talons, and wings; and such is their power, that they are able to convey animals of considerable size, alive, to their places of abode. They often bear away, in this manner, lambs, kids, and the young of the gazelle. Three instances, at least, are known, where they have carried off children. In the year 1737, in Norway, a boy upwards of two years of age was carried off by an eagle in the sight of his parents. Anderson, in his history of Iceland, asserts that in that island children of four and five years of age have experienced the same fate; and Ray mentions that in one of the Orkneys an infant of a year old was seized in the talons of an eagle, and conveyed about four miles to its eyry. *Edin. Ency.* The principal food of the young eagle is blood. The proof of this fact may be seen in Scheutzer's *Phys. Sac., in loc.* ¶ *And where the slain are, there is she.* Heb., *the slain*; referring perhaps primarily to a field of battle—where horses, camels, and men lie in confusion. It is not improbable that the Saviour had this passage in view when he said, speaking of the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, "For whosoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." *Matth. xxiv. 28.* Of the fact that they thus assemble, there can be no doubt. The argument in proof of the wisdom and majesty of the Almighty in these references to the animal creation, is derived from their strength, their instincts, and their peculiar habits. We may make two remarks, in view of the argument as here stated. (1.) One relates to the remarkable accuracy with which they are referred to. The statements are not vague and general, but are minute and characteristic, about the habits and the instincts of the animals referred to. The very things are selected which are

now known to distinguish those animals, and which are not found to exist in the same degree, if at all, in others. Subsequent investigations have served to confirm the accuracy of these descriptions, and they may be taken now as a correct account *even to the letter* of the natural history of the different animals referred to. If, therefore, as has already been stated, this is to be regarded as an indication of the state of natural science in the time of Job, it shows quite an advanced state; if it is *not* an indication of the existing state of knowledge in his time, if there was no such acquaintance with the animal creation as the result of observation, then it shows that these were truly the words of God, and are to be regarded as direct inspiration. At all events, the state-

ment was evidently made under the influence of inspiration, and is worthy of the origin which it claims. (2.) The second remark is, that the progress of discovery in the science of natural history has only served to confirm and expand the argument here adverted to. Every new fact in regard to the habits and instincts of animals is a new proof of the wisdom and greatness of God; and we may appeal now, with all the knowledge which we have on these subjects, with unanswerable force, to the habits and instincts of the wild goats of the rock, the wild ass, the rhinoceros, the ostrich, the horse, the hawk, and the eagle, as each one furnishing some striking and peculiar proof the wisdom, goodness, superintending providence, and power of the Great Creator.

## CHAPTER XL

## ANALYSIS OF CHAPTERS XL. AND XLI.

THESE chapters consist of the following parts:—

I. God rebukes Job for the spirit which he had manifested, and especially for his presumption in contending with him, and for the impropriety of the language in which he had indulged, and which was the same as reproving God, vs. 1, 2.

II. Job confesses his guilt. He had on a former occasion expressed his desire to carry his cause immediately before God (ch. xlii. 3, 20, 21), and to argue it there. He was sure that he would be able to vindicate himself, and show that he did not deserve the peculiar calamities which had come upon him, and which were appealed to by his friends as full proof that he was a wicked man. Now, however, overpowered by the majesty of God, and by the argument which he had used, he is silent. He does not adventure to go into the argument. He confesses that he is vile, and says that he would lay his hand upon his mouth. He *had* spoken repeatedly, but he could proceed no farther, vs. 3—5.

III. God then pursues and completes the argument which he had commenced, in proof of his own majesty and glory. The argument is continued through this and the following chapter, and comprises the following subjects, viz:—

(1.) An appeal to the power and majesty of God, vs. 7—14. That power was displayed in his arm in executing judgments; in his thunder; in casting down the proud; and in trampling the wicked in the dust. God says that if Job could put forth power like this, then he would confess that his own hand could save him.

(2.) He appeals to the *behemoth*, and this chapter concludes with a detailed description of this animal of immense strength, which might be regarded as in some sort an illustration of the mighty power of the Most High, vs. 15—24.

(3.) The whole argument is closed (ch. xli) by an appeal to the *leviathan*, as the chief among the works of God, and as showing his dominion over the sea. This immense sea-monster is described at length, and in the most sublime manner; and the *argument* is, that a Being who could form such an animal, and control him, must be a Being of infinite majesty and glory, before whom man should bow down with profound reverence and silence. This sublime argument is not so conducted as to remove or explain the difficulties which pressed upon the minds of Job and his friends. No statements are made respecting the reason of afflictions; the question whether trials are evidence of the moral character of the sufferer is not decided, and no reference is made to the future state, and to the fact that all these inequalities would be adjusted there. The object of the whole argument is to produce an overwhelming sense of the majesty and glory of God; to show the impropriety of complaining and murmuring against the



government of one so exalted and so powerful; and to inculcate the duty of calm acquiescence in the expressions of his will. The object was not to disclose all the light in regard to the difficult questions about the government of God which *could be* communicated, nor to anticipate the glorious truths which were reserved for the Christian revelation, but to produce a state of submission to *the will of God*. It was to make men feel that God had a right to reign, and that they were to be submissive, not because they saw the *reasons* of his doings, but because *such was his will*. This is still a proper ground of argument with the afflicted, and is often, in fact, about all that can be referred to.

**M**OREOVER, the LORD answered Job, and said,

2 Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him?

a c. 33. 13. Is. 27. 4.

1. *Moreover, the LORD answered Job.* The word *answered* is used here as it is often in the Scriptures, not to denote a reply to what had been immediately said, but to take up or continue an argument. What God said here was designed as a reply to the spirit which Job had so frequently manifested.

2. *Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him?* Gesenius renders this, "Contending shall the reprover of God contend with the Almighty?" Prof. Lee, "Shall one by contending with the Almighty correct this?" On the grammatical construction, see Gesenius on the word יָסֹר, and Rosenmüller and Lee, *in loc.* The meaning seems to be this: "Will he who would enter into a controversy with the Almighty now presume to instruct him? He that was so desirous of arguing his cause with God, will he now answer?" All the language here used is taken from courts, and is such as I have had frequent occasion to explain in these Notes. The reference is to the fact that Job had so often expressed a wish to carry his cause, as before a judicial tribunal, directly up to God. He had felt that if he could get it there, he could so argue it as to secure a verdict in his favor; that he could set arguments before the Almighty which would secure a reversal of the fearful sentence which had gone out against him, and which had caused him to be held as a guilty man. God now asks whether he who had been so anxious to have a legal argument, and to carry his cause himself before God—a man disposed to litigation before God (לִיטִיגָה)—was still of the

he that reproveth God, let him answer it.

3 Then Job answered the LORD, and said,

same mind, and felt himself qualified to take upon himself the office of an *instructor, a corrector, an admonisher*, (יָסֹר) of God? He had the opportunity now, and God here paused, after the sublime exhibition of his majesty and power in the previous chapters, to give him an opportunity, as he wished, to carry his cause directly before him. The result is stated in vs. 3, 4. Job had now nothing to say. ¶ *He that reproveth God.* Or rather, "He that is disposed to carry his cause before God," as Job had often expressed a wish to do. The word here used (יָסֹר) is often employed, especially in Hiphil, in a *forensic sense*, and means to *argue, to show, to prove* anything; then to *argue down, to confute, to convict*. See Job vi. 25; xiii. 15; xix. 5; xxii. 12; Prov. ix. 7, 8; xv. 12; xix. 25. It is evidently used in that sense here—a Hiphil participle (מְיָסֵר)—and refers, not to any man in general who reproves God, but to Job in particular, as having expressed a wish to carry his cause before him, and to argue it there. ¶ *Let him answer it.* Or rather, "Let him answer him." That is, "Is he now ready to answer? There is now an opportunity for him to carry his cause, as he wished, directly before God. Is he ready to embrace the opportunity, and to answer now what the Almighty has said?" This does not mean, then, as the common version would seem to imply, that the man who reproves God must be held responsible for it, but that Job, who had expressed the wish to carry his cause before God, had now an

4 Behold, I am vile: <sup>b</sup> what shall I answer thee? I will lay <sup>c</sup>

<sup>b</sup> Ezr. 9. 6, c. 42. 6. Ps. 51. 4. Is. 6. 5, 64. 6.  
Da. 9. 5, 7. Lu. 18. 13.  
<sup>c</sup> c. 29. 9. Mi. 7. 16. Zech. 2. 13. Ro. 3. 19.

opportunity to do so. That this is the meaning, is apparent from the next verses, where Job says that he was confounded, and had nothing to say.

4. *Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee?* "Instead of being able to argue my cause, and to vindicate myself as I had expected, I now see that I am guilty, and I have nothing to say." He had argued boldly with his friends. He had before them maintained his innocence of the charges which they brought against him, and had supposed that he would be able to maintain the same argument before God. But when the opportunity was given, he felt that he was a poor, weak man; a guilty and miserable offender. It is a very different thing to maintain our cause before God from what it is to maintain it before men; and though we may attempt to vindicate our own righteousness when we argue with our fellow-creatures, yet, when we come to maintain it before God we shall be dumb. On earth, men vindicate themselves; what will they do when they come to stand before God in the judgment? ¶ *I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.* An expression of silence. Catlin, in his account of the Mandan Indians, says that this is a common custom with them when anything wonderful occurs. Some of them laid their hands on their mouths, and remained in this posture by the hour, as an expression of astonishment at the wonders produced by the brush in the art of painting. Comp. Notes on ch. xxi. 5; xxix. 9.

5. *Once have I spoken.* That is, in vindicating myself. He had once spoken of God in an irreverent and improper manner, and he now saw it. ¶ *But I will not answer.* I will not now answer, as I had expressed the wish to do. Job now saw that he had spoken in an improper manner, and he says that he would not repeat what he had said. ¶ *Yea, twice.* He had not only offended once, as if in a thoughtless and hasty

mine hand upon my mouth.

5 Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further.

manner, but he had repeated it, showing deliberation, and thus aggravating his guilt. When a man is brought to a willingness to confess that he has done wrong *once*, he will be very likely to see that he has been guilty of more than one offence. One sin will draw on the remembrance of another, and the gate once open, a flood of sins will rush to the recollection. It is not common that a man can so *isolate* a sin as to repent of that alone, or so look at one offence against God as not to feel that he has been often guilty of the same crimes. ¶ *But I will proceed no further.* Job felt doubtless that if he should allow himself to speak again, or to attempt now to vindicate himself, he would be in danger of committing the same error again. He now saw that God was right; that he had himself repeatedly indulged in an improper spirit, and that all that became him was a penitent confession in the fewest words possible. We may learn here, (1.) That a view of God is fitted to produce in us a deep sense of our own sins. No one can feel himself to be in the presence of God, or regard the Almighty as speaking to him, without saying, "Lo, I am vile!" There is nothing so much fitted to produce a sense of sinfulness and nothingness as a view of God. (2.) The world will be dumb at the day of judgment. They who have been most loud and bold in vindicating themselves will then be silent, and will confess that they are vile, and the whole world "will become guilty before God." If the presence and the voice of God produced such an effect on so good a man as Job, what will it not do on a wicked world? (3.) A true penitent is disposed to use but few words. "God be merciful to me a sinner," or, "lo, I am vile," is about all the language which the penitent employs. He does not go into long arguments, into metaphysical distinctions, into apologies and vindications, but uses the simplest language of confession, and

6 Then <sup>d</sup> answered the LORD unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

7 Gird up thy loins now like  
d c. 38. 1, &c.

then leaves the soul, and the cause, in the hands of God. (4.) Repentance consists in stopping where we are, and in resolving to add no more sin. "I have erred," is its language. "I will not add to it, I will do so no more," is the immediate response of the soul. A readiness to go into a vindication, or to expose oneself to the danger of sinning again in the same way, is an evidence that there is no true repentance. Job, a true penitent, would not allow himself even to *repeat* again on the subject, lest he should be guilty of the sin which he had already committed. (5.) In repentance we must be willing to retract our errors, and confess that we were wrong—no matter what favorite opinions we have had, or how tenaciously and zealously we have defended and held them. Job had constructed many beautiful and eloquent arguments in defence of his opinions; he had brought to bear on the subject all the results of his observation; all his attainments in science; all the adages and maxims that he had derived from the ancients, and from a long intercourse with mankind; but he was now brought to a willingness to confess that his arguments were not solid, and that the opinions which he had cherished were erroneous. It is often more difficult to abandon *opinions* than *vices*; and the proud philosopher when he exercises repentance has a more difficult task than the victim of low and debasing sensuality. His opinions are his idols. They embody the results of his reading, his reflections, his conversation, his observation, and they become a part of himself. Hence it is that so many abandoned sinners are converted, and so few philosophers; that religion spreads often with so much success among the obscure and the openly wicked, while so few of the "wise men of the world" are called and saved.

6 Then answered the Lord unto Job

a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

8 Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?

*out of the whirlwind.* See Notes on ch. xxxviii. 1. God here resumes the argument which had been interrupted, in order to give Job an opportunity to speak and to carry his cause before the Almighty, as he had desired. See ver. 2. Since Job had nothing to say, the argument, which had been suspended, is resumed and completed.

7. *Gird up thy loins now like a man.* An expression taken from the ancient mode of dress. That was a loose, flowing robe, which was secured by a girdle when travelling, or when one entered upon anything requiring energy. See Notes on Matt. v. 38—41. The meaning here is, "Prepare thyself for the highest effort that can be made. Put forth all your strength, and explain to me what will now be said." Comp. Notes on Isa. xli. 21. ¶ *I will demand of thee.* Heb., "I will ask of thee." That is, I will submit some questions to you to be answered. ¶ *And declare thou unto me.* Heb., "Cause me to know." That is, furnish a satisfactory answer to these inquiries, so as to show that you understand the subject. The object is to appeal to the proofs of divine wisdom, and to show that the whole subject was far above human comprehension.

8. *Wilt thou disannul my judgment?* Wilt thou reverse the judgment which I have formed, and show that it should have been different from what it is? This was implied in what Job had undertaken. He had complained of the dealings of God, and this was the same as saying that he could show that those dealings should have been different from what they were. When a man murmurs against God, it is always implied that he supposes he could show why his dealings should be different from what they are, and that they should be reversed. ¶ *Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?* Or, rather, probably, "Wilt thou show that

9 Hast thou an arm like God?  
or canst thou thunder with a voice  
like him?

10 Deck thyself now *with* ma-  
jesty and excellency; and array  
thyself with glory and beauty.

11 Cast abroad the rage of thy  
wrath: and behold every one *that*

*e* Ps. 29. 3, 4.

*f* Ps. 93. 1, 104. 1.

I am wrong because thou art superior in justice?" Job had allowed himself to use language which strongly implied that God was improperly severe. He had regarded himself as punished far beyond what he deserved, and as suffering in a manner which justice did not demand. All this implied that *he* was more righteous in the case than God, for when a man allows himself to vent such complaints, it indicates that he esteems himself to be more just than his Maker. God now calls upon Job to maintain this proposition, since he had advanced it, and to urge the arguments which would prove that *he* was more righteous in the case than God. It was proper to demand this. It was a charge of such a nature that it could not be passed over in silence, and God asks, therefore, with emphasis, whether Job now supposed that he could institute such an argument as to show that he was right and his Maker wrong?

9. *Hast thou an arm like God?* The arm is the symbol of strength. The question here is, whether Job would venture to compare his strength with the omnipotence of God? ¶ *Or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?* Thunder is a symbol of the majesty of the Most High, and is often spoken of as the voice of God. See Ps. xxix. The question here is, whether Job could presume to compare himself with the Almighty, whose voice was the thunder?

10. *Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency.* That is, such as God has. Put on everything which you can, which would indicate rank, wealth, power, and see whether it could all be compared with the majesty of God.

*is* proud, and abase him.

12 Look on every one *that is* proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place.

13 Hide them in the dust together; and bind their faces in secret.

*g* Ex. 18. 11.

Comp. Ps. civ. 1, "O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honor and majesty."

11. *Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath.* That is, as God does. Show that the same effects can be produced by *your* indignation which there is in his. God appeals here to the effect of his displeasure in prostrating his foes as one of the evidences of his majesty and glory, and asks Job, if he would compare himself with him, to imitate him in this, and produce similar effects. ¶ *And behold every one that is proud, and abase him.* That is, look upon such an one and bring him low, or humble him by a look. It is implied here that God could do this, and he appeals to it as a proof of his power.

12. *And tread down the wicked in their place.* Even in the very place where they are, crush them to the dust, as God can. It is implied that God was able to do this, and he appeals to it as a proof of his power.

13. *Hide them in the dust together.* Comp. Isa. ii. 10. The meaning seems to be, that God had power to prostrate the wicked in the dust of the earth, and he calls upon Job to show *his* power by doing the same thing. ¶ *And bind their faces in secret.* The word *faces* here is probably used (like the Greek πρόσωπα) to denote *persons*. The phrase, "to bind them," is expressive of having them under control or subjection: and the phrase "in secret" may refer to some secret or safe place—as a dungeon or prison. The meaning of the whole is, that God had power to restrain and control the haughty and the wicked, and he appeals to Job to do the same.

14 Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.

14. *Then will I also confess unto thee, &c.* If you can do all this, it will be full proof that you can save yourself, and that you do not need the divine interposition. If he could do all this, then it might be admitted that he was qualified to pronounce a judgment on the divine counsels and dealings. He would then show that he had qualifications for conducting the affairs of the universe.

15. *Behold now behemoth.* Marg., "or, *the elephant*, as some think." In the close of the argument, God appeals to two animals as among the chief of his works, and as illustrating more than any others his power and majesty—the behemoth and the leviathan. A great variety of opinions has been entertained in regard to the animal referred to here, though the main inquiry has related to the question whether the *elephant* or the *hippopotamus* is denoted. Since the time of Bochart, who has gone into an extended examination of the subject, (*Hieroz.* P. ii. L. ii. c. xv.) the common opinion has been that the latter is here referred to. As a specimen of the method of interpreting the Bible which has prevailed, and as a proof of the slow progress which has been made towards settling the meaning of a difficult passage, we may refer to some of the opinions which have been entertained in regard to this animal. They are chiefly taken from the collection of opinions made by Schultens, in *loc.* Among them are the following: (1.) That wild animals in general are denoted. This appears to have been the opinion of the translators of the Septuagint. (2.) Some of the Rabbins supposed that a huge monster was referred to, that ate every day "the grass of a thousand mountains." (3.) It has been held by some that the wild bull was referred to. This was the opinion particularly of Sanctius. (4.) The common opinion, until the time of Bochart, has been that the elephant was meant. See

15 Behold now <sup>1</sup> behemoth, which I made with thee; he eateth grass as an ox.

<sup>1</sup> or, *the elephant*, as some think.

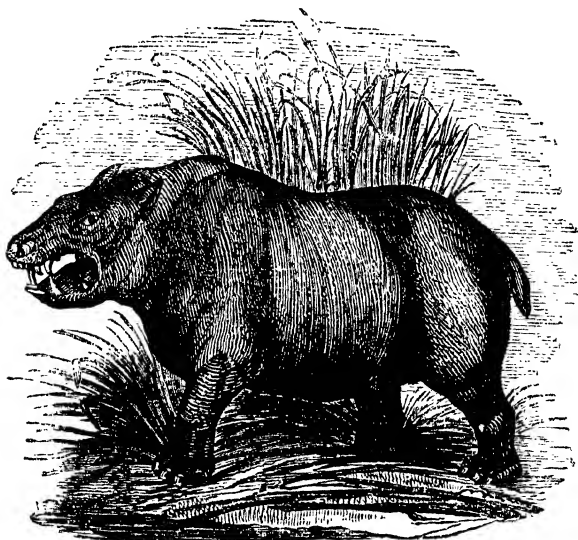
the particular authors who have held this opinion enumerated in Schultens. (5.) Bochart maintained, and since his time the opinion has been generally acquiesced in, that the *river-horse* of the Nile, or the hippopotamus, was referred to. This opinion he has defended at length in the *Hieroz.* P. ii. L. v. c. xv. (6.) Others have held that some "hieroglyphic monster" was referred to, or that the whole description was an emblematic representation, though without any living original. Among those who have held this sentiment, some have supposed that it is designed to be emblematic of the old serpent; others, of the corrupt and fallen nature of man; others, that the proud, the cruel, and the bloody are denoted; most of the "Fathers" supposed that the Devil was here emblematically represented by the behemoth and the leviathan; and one writer has maintained that Christ was referred to! To these opinions may be added the supposition of Dr. Good, that the behemoth here described is at present a genus altogether extinct, like the mammoth, and other animals that have been discovered in fossil remains. This opinion is also entertained by the author of the article on *Mazology*, in the Edinburgh Encyclopædia, chiefly for the reason that the description of the *tail* of the behemoth (ver. 17) does not well accord with the hippopotamus. There must be admitted to be some plausibility in this conjecture of Dr. Good, though perhaps I shall be able to show that there is no necessity of resorting to this supposition. The word *behemoth*, (בְּהֵמוֹת), used here in the plural number, occurs often in the singular number, to denote a dumb beast, usually applied to the larger kind of quadrupeds. It occurs very often in the Scriptures, and is usually translated *beast*, or collectively *cattle*. It usually denotes land animals, in opposition to birds or reptiles. See the Lexicons, and Taylor's *Hebrew*

*Concordance.* It is rendered by Dr. Nordheimer, (*Heb. Con.*), in this place, *hippopotamus*. The plural form is often used (comp. Deut. xxxii. 24; Job xii. 7; Jer. xii. 4; Hab. ii. 17; Ps. 1. 10), but in no other instance is it employed as a proper name. Gesenius supposes that under the form of the word here used, there lies concealed some Egyptian name for the hippopotamus, "so modified as to put on the appearance of a Semitic word. Thus the Ethiopian *pehemout* denotes *water-ox*, by which epithet (*bomario*) the Italians also designate the hippopotamus." The translations do not afford much aid in determining the meaning of the word. The LXX render it, *ἄγρια*, *wild beasts*; Jerome retains the word, *Behemoth*; the Chaldee, *ܒܝܬܝܐ*, *beast*; the Syriac retains the Hebrew word; Coverdale renders it, "cruel beast;" Prof. Lee, "the beasts;" Umbreit, *Nilpferd*, "Nile-horse;" and Noyes, "river-horse." The only method of ascertaining, therefore, what animal is here intended, is to compare carefully the characteristics here referred to with the animals now known, and to find in what one these characteristics exist. We may here safely presume on the entire accuracy of the description, since we have found the previous descriptions of animals to accord entirely with the habits of those existing at the present day. The illustration drawn from the passage before us, in regard to the nature of the animal, consists of two parts. (1.) The *place* which the description occupies in the argument. That it is an *aquatic* animal, seems to follow from the plan and structure of the argument. In the two discourses of JEROMAH (ch. xxxviii.—xli.), the appeal is made, first, to the phenomena of nature (ch. xxxviii.); then to the beasts of the earth, among whom the ostrich is reckoned (ch. xxxix. 1—25); then to the fowls of the air (ch. xxxix. 26—30); and then follows the description of the behemoth and the leviathan. It would seem that an argument of this kind would not be constructed without some allusion to the principal wonders of the deep; and the fair presumption, therefore, is, that the reference here is to the principal ani-

mals of the aquatic race. The argument in regard to the nature of the animal from the *place* which the description occupies, seems to be confirmed by the fact that the account of the behemoth is immediately followed by that of the leviathan—beyond all question an aquatic monster. As they are here grouped together in the argument, it is probable that they belong to the same class; and if by the leviathan is meant the *crocodile*, then the presumption is, that the river-horse, or the hippopotamus, is here intended. These two animals, as being Egyptian wonders, are everywhere mentioned together by ancient writers. See Herodotus, ii. 69—71, Diod. Sic. i. 35, and Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxviii. 8. (2.) The character of the animal may be determined from the *particular things* specified. Those are the following: (a) It is an amphibious animal, or an animal whose usual resort is the river, though he is occasionally on land. This is evident, because he is mentioned as lying under the covert of the reed and the fens; as abiding in marshy places, or among the willows of the brook (vs. 21, 22), while at other times he is on the mountains, or among other animals, and feeds on grass like the ox, vs. 15, 20. This account would not agree well with the elephant, whose residence is not among marshes and fens, but on solid ground. (b) He is not a carnivorous animal. This is apparent, for it is expressly mentioned that he feeds on grass, and no allusion is made to his at any time eating flesh, vs. 15, 20. This part of the description would agree with the elephant as well as with the hippopotamus. (c) His strength is in his loins, and in the navel of his belly, ver. 16. This would agree with the hippopotamus, whose belly is equally guarded by his thick skin with the rest of his body, but is not true of the elephant. The strength of the elephant is in his head and neck, and his weakest part, the part where he can be most successfully attacked, is his belly. There the skin is thin and tender, and it is there that the rhinoceros attacks him, and that he is even annoyed by insects. Pliny, *Lib. viii. c. 20.* *Ælian*, *Lib. xvii. c. 44.* Comp. Notes on ver.

16. (*d*) He is distinguished for some peculiar movement of his tail—some slow and stately motion, or a certain *inflexibility* of the tail, like a cedar. This will agree with the account of the hippopotamus. See Notes on ver. 17. (*e*) He is remarkable for the strength of his bones, ver. 18. (*f*) He is remarkable for the quantity of water which he drinks at a time, ver. 23; and (*g*) he has the power of forcing his way, chiefly by the strength of his nose, through snares by which it is attempted to take him, ver. 24. These characteristics agree better with the hippopotamus than with any other known animal, and at present critics, with few exceptions, agree in the opinion that this is the animal which is referred to. As additional reasons for supposing that the *elephant* is not referred to, we may add, (1) that there is no allusion to the proboscis of the elephant, a part of the animal that could not have failed to be alluded to if the description had pertained to him; and (2) that the elephant was wholly unknown in Arabia and Egypt. The hippopotamus (*ἵππο-*

*πόταμος*) or *river-horse* belongs to the mammalia, and is of the order of the *pachydermata*, or thick-skinned animals. To this order belong also the elephant, the tapirus, the rhinoceros, and the swine. *Edin. Ency.*, art. *Mazology*. The hippopotamus is found principally on the banks of the Nile, though it is found also in the other large rivers of Africa, as the Niger, and the rivers which lie between that and the Cape of Good Hope. It is not found in any of the rivers which run north into the Mediterranean except the Nile, and there only at present in that portion which traverses Upper Egypt; and it is found also in the lakes and fens of Ethiopia. It is distinguished by a broad head; its lips are very thick, and the muzzle much inflated; it has four very large projecting curved teeth in the under jaw, and four also in the upper; the skin is very thick, the legs short, four toes on each foot, inverted, with small hoofs, and the tail is very short. The following engraving will give a good illustration of the general appearance of the hippopotamus:



The appearance of the animal, when on land, is represented as very uncouth, the body being very large, flat, and round, the head enormously large in proportion, the feet as disproportionably short, and the armament of teeth in its mouth truly formidable. The length of a male has been known to be seventeen feet, the height seven, and the circumference fifteen; the head three feet and a half, and the mouth about two feet in width. Mr. Bruce mentions some in the lake Tzana that were twenty feet in length. The whole animal is covered with short hair, which is more thickly set on the under than the upper parts. The general color of the animal is brownish. The skin is exceedingly tough and strong, and was used by the ancient Egyptians for the manufacture of shields. They are timid and sluggish on land, and when pursued they betake themselves to the water, plunge in, and walk on the bottom, though often compelled to rise to the surface to take in fresh air. In the day-time they are so much afraid of being discovered, that when they rise for the purposes of breathing, they only put their noses out of the water; but in rivers that are unfrequented by mankind they put out the whole head. In shallow rivers they make deep holes in the bottom to conceal their bulk. They are eaten with avidity by the inhabitants of Africa. The following account of the capture of a hippopotamus serves greatly to elucidate the description in the book of Job, and to show its correctness, even in those points which have formerly been regarded as poetical exaggerations. It is translated from the travels of M. Kuppell, the German naturalist, who visited Upper Egypt, and the countries still farther up the Nile, and is the latest traveller in those regions. (*Reisen in Nubia, Kordofan; &c.*, Frankf. 1829, p. 52, seq.) "In the province of Dongola, the fishermen and hippopotamus hunters form a distinct class or caste; and are called in the Berber language *Hauawit* (pronounced *Ilowowit*.) They make use of a small canoe, formed from a single tree, about ten feet long, and capable of carrying two, and at most three men.

The harpoon which they use in hunting the hippopotamus, has a strong barb just at the back of the blade or sharp edge; above this a long and strong cord is fastened to the iron, and to the other end of this cord a block of light wood, to serve as a buoy, and aid in tracing out and following the animal when struck. The iron is then slightly fastened upon a wooden handle, or lance, about eight feet long. The hunters of the hippopotamus harpoon their prey either by day or by night; but they prefer the former, because they can then better parry the ferocious assaults of the enraged animal. The hunter takes in his right hand the handle of the harpoon, with a part of the cord; in his left the remainder of the cord, with the buoy. In this manner he cautiously approaches the creature as it sleeps by day upon a small island, or he watches at night for those parts of the shore where he hopes the animal will come up out of the water, in order to feed in the fields of grain. When he has gained the desired distance (about seven paces), he throws the lance with his full strength; and the harpoon, in order to hold, must penetrate the thick hide and into the flesh. The wounded beast commonly makes for the water, and plunges beneath it, in order to conceal himself; the handle of the harpoon falls off, but the buoy swims, and indicates the direction which the animal takes. The harpooning of the hippopotamus is attended with great danger when the hunter is perceived by the animal before he has thrown the harpoon. In such cases the beast sometimes rushes, enraged, upon his assailant, and crushes him at once between his wide and formidable jaws—an occurrence that once took place during our residence near Shendi. Sometimes the most harmless objects excite the rage of this animal; thus, in the region of Amera, a hippopotamus once crouched, in the same way, several cattle that were fastened to a water-wheel. So soon as the animal has been successfully struck, the hunters hasten in their canoe cautiously to approach the buoy, to which they fasten a long rope; with the other end of this they proceed to a large boat or



bark, on board of which are their companions. The rope is now drawn in; the pain thus occasioned by the barb of the harpoon excites the rage of the animal, and he no sooner perceives the bark, than he rushes upon it; seizes it, if possible, with his teeth; and sometimes succeeds in shattering it, or oversetting it. The hunters, in the mean time, are not idle; they fasten five or six other harpoons in his flesh, and exert all their strength, by means of the cords of these, to keep him close alongside of the bark, in order thus to diminish, in some measure, the effects of his violence. They endeavor, with a long, sharp iron, to divide the *ligamentum jugi*, or to beat in the skull—the usual modes in which the natives kill this animal. Since the carcase of a full-grown hippopotamus is too large to be drawn out of the water without quite a number of men, they commonly cut up the animal, when killed, in the water, and draw the pieces ashore. In the whole Turkish provinces of Dongola, there are only one or two hippopotami killed annually. In the years 1821-23, inclusive, there were nine killed, four of which were killed by us. The flesh of the young animal is very good eating; when full-grown, they are usually very fat, and their carcase is commonly estimated as equal to four or five oxen. The hide is used only for making whips, which are excellent; and one hide furnishes from three hundred and fifty to five hundred of them. The teeth are not used. One of the hippopotami which we killed was a very old male, and seemed to have reached his utmost growth. He measured, from the snout to the end of the tail, about fifteen feet, and his tusks, from the root to the point, along the external curve, twenty-eight inches. In order to kill him, we had a battle with him of four hours long, and that too in the night. Indeed, he came very near destroying our large bark, and with it, perhaps, all our lives. The moment he saw the hunters in the small canoe, as they were about to fasten the long rope to the buoy, in order to draw him in, he threw himself with one rush upon it,

dragged it with him under water, and shattered it to pieces. The two hunters escaped the extreme danger with great difficulty. Out of twenty-five musketballs which were fired into the monster's head, at the distance of five feet, only one penetrated the hide and the bones near the nose; so that every time he breathed he snorted streams of blood upon the bark. All the other balls remained sticking in the thickness of his hide. We had at last to employ a small cannon, the use of which at so short a distance had not before entered our minds; but it was only after five of its balls, fired at the distance of a few feet, had mangled, most shockingly, the head and body of the monster, that he gave up the ghost. The darkness of the night augmented the horrors and dangers of the contest. This gigantic hippopotamus dragged our large bark at will in every direction of the stream; and it was in a fortunate moment for us that he yielded, just as he had drawn the bark among a labyrinth of rocks, which might have been so much the more dangerous, because, from the great confusion on board, no one had observed them. Hippopotami of the size of the one above described cannot be killed by the natives, for want of a cannon. These animals are a real plague to the land, in consequence of their voraciousness. The inhabitants have no permanent means of keeping them away from their fields and plantations; all that they do is to make a noise during the night with a drum, and to keep up fires in different places. In some parts the hippopotami are so bold that they will yield up their pastures, or places of feeding, only when a large number of persons come rushing upon them with sticks and loud cries." The method of taking the hippopotamus by the Egyptians was the following: "It was entangled by a running noose, at the extremity of a long line wound upon a reel, at the same time that it was struck by the spear of the chasseur. This weapon consisted of a broad, flat blade, furnished with a deep tooth or barb at the side, having a strong rope of considerable length attached to its upper end, and running over the

notched summit of a wooden shaft, which was inserted into the head or blade, like a common javelin. It was thrown in the same manner, but on striking, the shaft fell, and the iron head alone remained in the body of the animal, which, on receiving the wound, plunged into deep water, the rope having been immediately let out. When fatigued by exertion, the hippopotamus was dragged to the boat, from which it again plunged, and the same was

repeated until it became perfectly exhausted; frequently receiving additional wounds, and being entangled by other nooses, which the attendants held in readiness, as it was brought within their reach." Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, vol. iii. pp. 70, 71. The following sketch of the taking of a hippopotamus, from a drawing at Thebes, will illustrate this interesting subject:

## CHASE OF THE HIPPOPOTAMUS.

The Chasseur is accompanied by his children—an attendant throws a noose over the wounded animal.



¶ Which I made with thee. That is, either "I have made him as well as you, have formed him to be a fellow-creature with thee," or, "I have made

him near thee"—to wit, in Egypt. The latter Bochart supposes to be the true interpretation, though the former is the more natural. According to

16 Lo now, his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly.

that, the meaning is, that God was the Creator of both, and he calls on Job to contemplate the power and greatness of a fellow-creature, though a brute, as illustrating his own power and majesty. ¶ *He eateth grass as an ox.* This is mentioned as a remarkable property of this animal. The reasons why it was regarded as so remarkable may have been, (1) that it might have been supposed that an animal so huge and fierce, and armed with such a set of teeth, would be carnivorous, like the lion or the tiger; and (2) it was remarkable that an animal that commonly lived in the water should be graminivorous, as if it were wholly a land animal. The common food of the hippopotamus is fish. In the water they pursue their prey with great swiftness and perseverance. They swim with much force, and are capable of remaining at the bottom of a river for thirty or forty minutes. On some occasions three or four of them are seen at the bottom of a river, near some cataract, forming a kind of line, and seizing upon such fish as are forced down by the violence of the stream. *Goldsmith.* But it often happens that this kind of food is not found in sufficient abundance, and the animal is then forced on land, where it commits great depredations among plantations of sugar-cane and grain. The fact here adverted to, that the food of the hippopotamus is grass or herbs, is also mentioned by Diodorus—*Κατανέμεται τὸν τε οἶον καὶ τὸν χότρον.* The same thing is mentioned also by Sparrman, *Travels through South Africa*, p. 563, Germ. Trans.

16. Lo now, his strength is in his loins. The inspection of the figure of the hippopotamus will show the accuracy of this. The strength of the elephant is in the neck; of the lion in the paw; of the horse and ox in the shoulders; but the principal power of the river-horse is in the loins. Comp. Nahum ii. 1. This passage is one that

17 He moveth his tail like a cedar: the sinews of his stones are wrapped together.

<sup>1</sup> or, setteth up.

proves that the elephant cannot be referred to. ¶ *And his force is in the navel of his belly.* The word which is here rendered *navel* (שֵׁן) means, properly, *firm, hard, tough*, and in the plural form, which occurs here, means the *firm, or tough* parts of the belly. It is not used to denote the *navel* in any place in the Bible, and should not have been so rendered here. The reference is to the muscles and tendons of this part of the body, and perhaps particularly to the fact that the hippopotamus, by crawling so much on his belly among the stones of the stream or on land, acquires a peculiar hardness or strength in those parts of the body. This clearly proves that the elephant is not intended. In that animal, this is the most tender part of the body. Pliny and Solinus both remark that the elephant has a thick, hard skin on the back, but that the skin of the belly is soft and tender. Pliny says (*Hist. Nat. Lib. viii. c. 20*), that the rhinoceros, when about to attack an elephant, “seeks his belly, as if he knew that that was the most tender part.” So *Ælian, Hist. Lib. xvii. c. 44*. See Bochart, as above.

17. He moveth his tail like a cedar. Marg., “or, setteth up.” The Hebrew word (שָׁנָה) means, *to bend, to curve*; and hence it commonly denotes *to be inclined, favorably disposed, to desire or please*. The obvious meaning here is, that this animal had some remarkable power of *bending or curving* its tail, and that there was some resemblance in this to the motion of the cedar-tree when moved by the wind. In what this resemblance consisted, or how this was a proof of its power, it is not quite easy to determine. Rosenmüller says that the meaning is, that the tail of the hippopotamus was “smooth, round, thick, and firm,” and in this respect resembled the cedar. The tail is short—being, according to Abdol-

18 His bones *are as* strong

pieces of brass; his bones *are* like bars of iron.

latip (see Ros.) about half a cubit in length. In the lower part, says he, it is thick, "equalling the extremities of the fingers;" and the idea here, according to this, is, that this short, thick, and apparently firm tail, was bent over by the will of the animal as the wind bends the branches of the cedar. The point of comparison is not the *length*, but the fact of its being easily bent over or curved at the pleasure of the animal. Why this, however, should have been mentioned as remarkable, or how the power of the animal in this respect differs from others, is not very apparent. Some, who have supposed the elephant to be here referred to, have understood this of the proboscis. But though *this would be* a remarkable proof of the power of the animal, the language of the original will not admit of it. The Hebrew word (אֵפֶסֶת) is used only to denote the tail. It is *possible* that there may be here an allusion to the unwieldy nature of every part of the animal, and especially to the thickness and inflexibility of the skin; and what was remarkable was, that notwithstanding this, this member was entirely at its command. Still, the reason of the comparison is not very clear. The description of the movement of the *tail* here given, would agree much better with some of the extinct orders of animals whose remains have been recently discovered and arranged by Cuvier, than with that of the hippopotamus. Particularly, it would agree with the account of the ichthyosaurus (see Buckland's *Geology, Bridgewater Treatise*, vol. i. 133, *seq.*), though the other parts of the animal here described would not accord well with this. ¶ *The sinews of his stones are wrapped together.* Good renders this, *haunches*; Noyes, Prof. Lee, Rosenmüller, and Schultens, *thighs*; and the LXX simply, "his sinews." The Hebrew word here used (אֵפֶסֶת) means, properly, *fear*, *terror*, Ex. xv. 16; Job xiii. 11; and, according to Gesenius, it then means, since *fear* is transferred to cowardice

and shame, anything which *causes* shame, and hence the secret parts. So it is understood here by our translators; but there does not seem to be any good reason for this translation, but there is every reason *why* it should *not* be thus rendered. The *object* of the description is to inspire a sense of the *power* of the animal, or of his capacity to inspire terror or dread; and hence the allusion here is to those parts which were fitted to convey this dread, or this sense of his power—to wit, his strength. The usual meaning of the word, therefore, should be retained, and the sense then would be, "the sinews of his terror," that is, of his parts fitted to inspire terror, "are wrapped together;" are firm, compact, solid. The allusion then is to his thighs or haunches, as being formidable in their aspect, and the seat of strength. The sinews or muscles of these parts seemed to be like a hard-twisted rope; compact, firm, solid, and such as to defy all attempts to overcome them.

18. *His bones are as strong pieces of brass.* The circumstance here adverted to was remarkable, because the common residence of the animal was the water, and the bones of aquatic animals are generally hollow, and much less firm than those of land animals. It should be observed here, that the word rendered *brass* in the Scriptures most probably denotes *copper*. Brass is a compound metal, composed of copper and zinc; and there is no reason to suppose that the art of compounding it was known at as early a period of the world as the time of Job. The word here translated "strong pieces" (קִנְיָן) is rendered by Schultens *alvei*—*channels*, or *beds*, as of a rivulet or stream; and by Rosenmüller, Gesenius, Noyes, and Umbreit, *tubes*—supposed to allude to the fact that they seemed to be hollow tubes of brass. But the more common meaning of the word is *strong*, *mighty*, and there is no impropriety in retaining that sense here; and then the meaning would be, that *his bones were*

19 He is the chief of the ways of God: he that made him can make his sword to approach unto him.

20 Surely the mountains bring

him forth food, <sup>h</sup> where all the beasts of the field play.

21 He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed, and fens.

<sup>h</sup> Ps. 104. 14.

so firm that they seemed to be made of solid metal.

19. *He is the chief of the ways of God.* In size and strength. The word rendered "chief" is used in a similar sense in Num. xxxiv. 20, "Amalek was the first of the nations;" that is, one of the most powerful and mighty of the nations. ¶ *He that made him can make his sword to approach unto him.* According to this translation, the sense is, that God had power over him, notwithstanding his great strength and size, and could take his life when he pleased. Yet this, though it would be a correct sentiment, does not seem to be that which the connexion demands. That would seem to require some allusion to the strength of the animal; and, accordingly, the translation suggested by Bochart, and adopted substantially by Rosenmüller, Umbreit, Noyes, Schulzens, Prof. Lee, and others, is to be preferred—"He that made him furnished him with a sword." The allusion then would be to his strong, sharp teeth, bearing a resemblance to a sword, and designed either for offence or for the purpose of cutting the long grass on which it fed when on the land. The propriety of this interpretation may be seen vindicated at length in Bochart, *Hieroz.* P. ii. Lib. v. c. xv. pp. 766, 772. The ἄρπη—the *harpe*, i. e., the sickle or scythe, was ascribed to the hippopotamus by some of the Greek writers. Thus Nicander, *Theriacon*, ver. 566:

"Ἦ ἵππων, τὸν Νείλος ὑπὲρ Σάϊν αἰθαλόεσσαν  
Βόσκει, ἀρούρησιν δὲ κακὴν ἐπιβάλλεται  
"ΑΡΠΗΝ.

On this passage the Scholiast remarks, "The ἄρπη, *harpe*, means a sickle, and the teeth of the hippopotamus are so called—teaching that this animal consumes (τρώγει) the harvest." See Bochart, also, for other examples. A

slight inspection of the engraving will show with what propriety it is said of the Creator of the hippopotamus, that he had armed him with a sickle, or sword.

20. *Surely the mountains bring him forth food.* That is, though he lies commonly among the reeds and fens, and is in the water a considerable portion of his time, yet he also wanders to the mountains, and finds his food there. But the point of the remark here does not seem to be, that the mountains brought forth fruit for him, but that he gathered it while all the wild beasts played around him, or sported in his very presence. It was remarkable that an animal so large and mighty, and armed with such a set of teeth, should not be carnivorous, and that the wild beasts on the mountains should continue their sports without danger or alarm in his very presence. This fact could be accounted for partly because the motions of the hippopotamus were so very slow and clumsy that the wild beasts had nothing to fear from him, and could easily escape from him if he were disposed to attack them, and partly from the fact that he seems to have preferred vegetable food. The hippopotamus is seldom carnivorous, except when driven by extreme hunger, and in no respect is he formed to be a beast of prey. In regard to the fact that the hippopotamus is sometimes found in mountainous or elevated places, see Bochart.

21. *He lieth under the shady trees.* Referring to his usually inactive and lazy life. He is disposed to lie down in the shade, and especially in the vegetable growth in marshy places on the banks of lakes and rivers, rather than to dwell in the open field or in the upland forest. This account agrees well with the habits of the hippopotamus. The word here, and in ver 22,

22 The shady trees cover him *with* their shadow; the willows of the brook compass him about.

rendered *shady trees* (סִטְאִים), is by Gesenius, Noyes, Prof. Lee, and Schultens, translated *lotus* and *wild lotus*. The Vulgate, Syriac, Rosenmüller, Aben-Ezra, and others, render it *shady trees*. It occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures, and it is difficult, therefore, to determine its meaning. According to Schultens and Gesenius, it is derived from the obsolete word סִטְאִים, *tzâd, to be thin, slender*; and hence in Arabic it is applied to the *wild lotus*—a plant that grows abundantly on the banks of the Nile, and that often serves the wild beasts of the desert for a place of retreat. It is not very important whether it be rendered the *lotus* or *shades*, though the probable derivation of the word seems to favor the former. ¶ *In the covert of the reed*. It is well known that *reeds* abounded on the banks of the Nile. These would furnish a convenient and a natural retreat for the hippopotamus. ¶ *And fens, marsh, marshy places*. This passage proves that the elephant is not here referred to. He is never found in such places.

22. The *shady trees*. Probably the *lote-trees*. See on ver. 21. The same word is here used. ¶ *The willows of the brook*. Of the *stream*, or *rivulet*. The Hebrew word (קִנֹּת) means rather a *wady*; a gorge or gully, which is swollen with torrents in the winter, but which is frequently dry in summer. See Notes on ch. vi. 15. Willows grew commonly on the banks of rivers. They could not be cultivated in the desert. Isa. xv. 7.

23. *Behold, he drinketh up a river*. Marg., *oppresseth*. The margin expresses the proper meaning of the Hebrew word, שָׁוַה. It usually means to oppress, to treat with violence and injustice; and to defraud, or extort. But a very different sense is given to this verse by Bochart, Gesenius, Noyes,

23 Behold, he <sup>1</sup> drinketh up a river, *and* hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth.

<sup>1</sup> *oppresseth*.

Schultens, Umbreit, Prof. Lee, and Rosenmüller. According to the interpretation given by them the meaning is, "The stream overfloweth, and he feareth not; he is secure, even though Jordan rush forth even to his mouth." The reference then would be, not to the fact that he was greedy in his mode of drinking, but to the fact that this huge and fierce animal, that found its food often on the land, and that reposed under the shade of the *lotus* and the papyrus, could live in the water as well as on the land, and was unmoved even though the impetuous torrent of a swollen river should overwhelm him. The *names* by which this translation is recommended are a sufficient guarantee that it is not a departure from the proper meaning of the original. It is also the most natural and obvious interpretation. It is impossible to make good sense of the phrase "he *oppresseth* a river;" nor does the word used properly admit of the translation "he drinketh up." The word *river* in this place, therefore (נָהָר), is to be regarded as in the nominative case to שָׁוַה, and the meaning is, that when a swollen and impetuous river rushes along and bears all before it, and, as it were, *oppresses* everything in its course, he is not alarmed; he makes no effort to flee; he lies perfectly calm and secure. What was *remarkable* in this appears to have been, that an animal that was so much on land, and that was not properly a fish, should be thus calm and composed when an impetuous torrent rolled over him. The LXX appear to have been aware that this was the true interpretation, for they render this part of the verse, Ἐὰν γίνῃται πλημμύρα, κ.τ.λ.—"Should there come a flood, he would not regard it." Our common translation seems to have been adopted from the Vulgate—*Ecce absorbebit fluvium*. ¶ *He trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth*.

24 He <sup>1</sup> taketh it with his

<sup>1</sup> or, *Will any take him in his sight, or, bore his nose with a gin?* c. 41. 1, 2.

Or rather, "He is confident [*i.e.* unmoved] though Jordan should rush forth to his mouth." The idea is, that though the whole river Jordan should seem to pour down upon him *as if* it were about to rush into his mouth, it would not disturb him. Even such an impetuous torrent would not alarm him. Being amphibious, he would not dread what would fill a land animal with alarm. There is no evidence that the hippopotamus was ever found in the river Jordan, nor is it necessary to suppose this in order to understand this passage. The mention of the Jordan shows indeed that this river was known to the writer of this book, and that it was probably written by some one who resided in the vicinity. In speaking of this huge foreign animal, it was not unnatural to mention a river that was familiarly known, and to say that he would not be alarmed should such a river rush suddenly and impetuously upon him. Even though the hippopotamus is an inhabitant of the Nile, and was never seen in the Jordan, it was much more natural to mention this river in this connexion than the Nile. It was better known, and the illustration would be better understood, and to an inhabitant of that country would be much more striking. I see no reason, therefore, for the supposition of Bochart and Rosenmüller, that the Jordan here is put for any large river. The illustration is just such as one would have used who was well acquainted with the Jordan—that the river-horse would not be alarmed even though such a river should pour impetuously upon him.

24. *He taketh it with his eyes.* Marg., "Or, *will any take him in his sight, or bore his nose with a gin?*" From this marginal reading it is evident that our

eyes: *his nose pierceth through snares.*

translators were much perplexed with this passage. Expositors have been also much embarrassed in regard to its meaning, and have differed much in their exposition. Rosenmüller supposes that this is to be regarded as a question, and is to be rendered, "Will the hunter take him while he sees him?"—meaning that he could not be taken without some snare or guile. The same view also is adopted by Bochart, who says that the hippopotamus could be taken only by some secret snare or pit-fall. The common mode of taking him, he says, was to excavate a place near where the river horse usually lay, and to cover it over with reeds and canes, so that he would fall into it unawares. The meaning then is, that the hunter could not approach him openly and secure him while he saw him, but that some secret plan must be adopted to take him. The meaning then is, "Can he be taken when he sees the hunter?" ¶ *His nose pierceth through snares.* Or rather, "When taken in snares, can any one pierce his nose?" That is, Can the hunter even then pierce his nose so as to put in a ring or cord, and lead him wherever he pleases? This was the common method by which a wild animal was secured when taken (see Notes on Isa. xxxvii. 29), but it is here said that this could not be done to this huge animal. He could not be subdued in this manner. He was a wild, untamed, and fierce animal, that defied all the usual methods by which wild beasts were made captive. In regard to the difficulty of taking this animal, see the account of the method by which it is now done, in the Notes on ver. 15. That account shows that there is a striking accuracy in the description.

## CHAPTER XLI.

## ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

For a general view of the design of this chapter, see the Analysis of ch. xl. The argument in this chapter is derived wholly from the leviathan, and relates to the following points :—He cannot be taken with a hook or with a cord, vs. 1, 2 ; he will not be tamed, or come and submit himself to man, vs. 3—5 ; he cannot be served up at a banquet, ver. 6 ; his head cannot be pierced with barbed irons, ver. 7 ; and the sight of him was enough to deter one from an attempt to take him, vs. 8—10. God then appeals to the particular parts of the animal, and goes into a minute description of him. He says he will not conceal his parts that are so fitted to excite terror and admiration, vs. 11, 12. He refers particularly to his mouth and teeth, vs. 13, 14 ; to his scales, vs. 15—17 ; to his eyes, like the eyelids of the morning, ver. 18 ; to the smoke and fire that seemed to go out of his mouth and nostrils, vs. 19—21 ; to the strength of his neck and the compactness of his flesh, vs. 22—24 ; to his irresistible power, and to the fact that he disregarded all the usual weapons for taking wild beasts, vs. 25—30 ; and to his appearance when he moves through the deep, vs. 31, 32. It is then added (vs. 33, 34), that there is nothing on earth like him, and that among the most proud works of God he is a king.

**C**ANST thou draw out <sup>1</sup> leviathan <sup>a</sup> with an hook? or his

<sup>1</sup> i. e., a whale, or, a whirlpool.  
<sup>a</sup> Ps. 104. 26. Is. 27. 1.

tongue with a cord *which* thou <sup>2</sup> lettest down?

<sup>2</sup> drownest.

1. *Canst thou draw out.* As a fish is drawn out of the water. The usual method by which fish were taken was by a hook; and the meaning here is, that it was not possible to take the leviathan in this manner. The whole description here is of an animal that lived in the water. ¶ *Leviathan.* Much has been written respecting this animal, and the opinions which have been entertained have been very various. Schultens enumerates the following classes of opinions in regard to the animal intended here. 1. The opinion that the word *leviathan* is to be retained, without attempting to explain it—implying that there was uncertainty as to the meaning. Under this head he refers to the Chaldee and the Vulgate, to *Aquila* and *Symmachus*, where the word is retained, and to the Septuagint, where the word *ῥάκοντα*, *dragon*, is used, and also to the Syriac and Arabic, where the same word is used. 2. The fable of the Jews, who mention a serpent so large that it encompassed the whole earth. A belief of the existence of such a marine serpent or monster still prevails among the Nestorians. 3. The opinion that the whale is intended. 4. The opinion that a large

fish called *Mular* or *Musar*, which is found in the Mediterranean, is denoted. This is the opinion of Grotius. 5. The opinion that the crocodile of the Nile is denoted. 6. The opinion of Hasaeus, that not the whale is intended, but the *Orca*, a sea-monster armed with teeth, and the enemy of the whale. 7. Others have understood the whole description as allegorical, as representing monsters of iniquity; and among these, some have regarded it as descriptive of the devil! See Schultens. To these may be added the description of Milton:

—“That sea-beast  
Leviathan, which God of all his works  
Created hugest that swim th’ ocean-stream:  
Him, haply, slumbering on the Norway foam,  
The pilot of some small night-founder’d skiff  
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,  
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind,  
Moors by his side under the lee, while night  
Invests the sea, and wished for morn delays.”  
PAR. LOST, B. i.

For a full investigation of the subject, Bochart may be consulted, *Hieroz.* P. ii. Lib. v. c. xvi.—xviii. The conclusion to which he comes is, that the crocodile of the Nile is denoted; and in this opinion critics have generally, since his time, acquiesced. The opinions which are entitled to most atten-



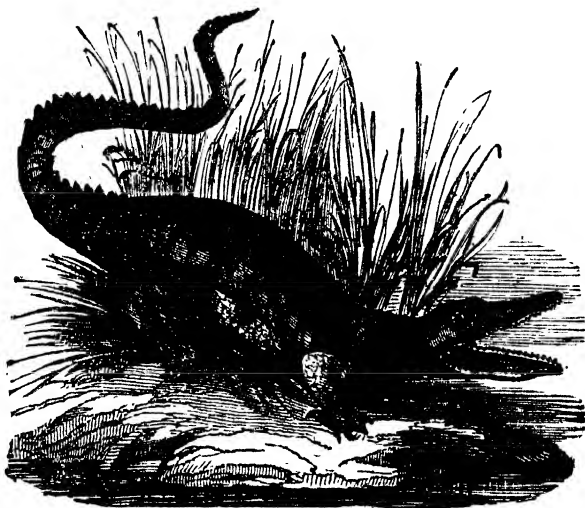
tion, are those which regard the animal here described as either the whale or the crocodile. The objections to the supposition that the whale is intended, are such as the following: (1.) That the whale tribes do not inhabit the Mediterranean, much less the rivers which empty into it—with which alone it is supposed Job could have been acquainted. (2.) That the animal here described differs from the whale in many essential particulars. "This family of marine monsters have neither proper snout nor nostrils, nor proper teeth. Instead of a snout, they have a mere spiracle, or blowing hole, with a double opening on the top of the head; and for teeth, a hard expanse of horny laminae, which we call whalebone, in the upper jaw. The eyes of the ~~common~~ whale, moreover, instead of answering the description here given, are most disproportionately small, and do not exceed in size those of the ox. Nor can this monster be regarded as of fierce habits or unconquerable courage; for instead of attacking the larger sea-animals for plunder, it feeds chiefly on crabs and medusas, and is often itself attacked by the ork or grampus, though less than half its size." *Dr. Good*. These considerations seem to be decisive in regard to the supposition that the animal here referred to is the whale. In fact, there is almost nothing in the description that corresponds with the whale, except the size. The whole account, on the contrary, agrees well with the crocodile, and there are several considerations which may be suggested, before we proceed with the exposition, which correspond with the supposition that this is the animal intended. They are such as these: (1.) The crocodile is a natural inhabitant of the Nile, and of other Asiatic and African rivers, and it is reasonable to suppose that an animal is referred to that was well known to one who lived in the country of Job. Though the Almighty is the speaker, and could describe an animal wholly unknown to Job, yet it is not reasonable to suppose that such an unknown animal would be selected. The appeal was to what he knew of the works of God. (2.) The general description agrees

with this animal. The leviathan is represented as wild, fierce, and ungovernable; as of vast extent, and as terrible in his aspect; as having a mouth of vast size, and armed with a formidable array of teeth; as covered with scales set near together like a coat of mail; as distinguished by the fierceness of his eyes, and by the frightful aspect of his mouth; as endowed with great strength, and incapable of being taken in any of the ordinary methods of securing wild beasts. This general description agrees well with the crocodile. These animals are found in the rivers of Africa, and also in the southern rivers of America, and are usually called the alligator. In the Amazon, the Niger, and the Nile, they occur in great numbers, and are usually from eighteen to twenty-seven feet long; and sometimes lying as close to each other as a raft of timber. *Goldsmith*. The crocodile grows to a great length, being sometimes found thirty feet long from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail; though its most usual length is about eighteen or twenty feet. "The armor, with which the upper part of the body is covered, may be numbered among the most elaborate pieces of Nature's mechanism. In the full-grown animal it is so strong and thick as easily to repel a musket-ball. The whole animal appears as if covered with the most regular and curious carved work. The mouth is of vast width, the gape having a somewhat flexuous outline, and both jaws being furnished with very numerous, sharp-pointed teeth. The number of teeth in each jaw is thirty or more, and they are so disposed as to alternate with each other when the mouth is closed. The legs are short, but strong and muscular. In the glowing regions of Africa, where it arrives at its full strength and power, it is justly regarded as the most formidable inhabitant of the rivers." *Shaw's Zoology*, vol. iii. p. 184. The crocodile seldom, except pressed with hunger, or for the purpose of depositing its eggs, leaves the water. Its usual method is to float along the surface, and seize whatever animals come within its reach; but when this method fails, it then goes

nearer the bank. There it waits, among the sedges, for any animal that may come down to drink, and seizes upon it, and drags it into the water. The tiger is thus often seized by the crocodile, and dragged into the river and drowned.

(3.) A third reason for supposing that the crocodile is here intended, arises from the former conclusion concerning the *behemoth*, ch. xl. 15, *seq.* The description of the leviathan immediately follows that, and the presumption is that they were animals that were usually found inhabiting the same district of country. If, therefore, the *behemoth* be the hippopotamus, there is a presumption that the leviathan is the crocodile—an inhabitant of the same river, equally amphibious, and even more terrible. “And this consideration,” says the editor of the Pictorial Bible, “is strengthened, when we consider that the two animals were so associated by the ancients. Some of the paintings at Herculaneum represent Egyptian landscapes, in which we see the crocodile lying among the reeds, and the hippopotamus browsing upon the plants on

an island. So also in the famous Mosaic pavement at Præneste, representing the plants and animals of Egypt and Ethiopia, the river-horse and the crocodile are associated in the same group, in the river Nile.” The crocodile was formerly found in abundance in Lower Egypt and the Delta, but it now limits the extent of its visits northward to the districts about Manfaloot, and the hippopotamus is no longer seen in Lower Ethiopia. Neither the hippopotamus nor the crocodile appear to have been eaten by the ancient Egyptians. Pliny mentions the medicinal properties of both of them (xxviii. 8), and Plutarch affirms that the people of Apollinopolis used to eat the crocodile (*de Isid.* s. 50); but this does not appear to have been a usual custom. Herodotus says that “some of the Egyptians consider the crocodile sacred, while others make war upon it; and those who live about Thebes and the lake Moeris (in the Arsinoïte nome), hold it in great veneration.” ii. 69. The following engraving, from the Pictorial Bible, will furnish an idea of the form of the crocodile:



In some cases the crocodile was treated with the greatest respect, and kept up at considerable expense; it was fed and attended with the most scrupulous care; geese, fish, and various meats were dressed purposely for it; they ornamented its head with ear-rings and its feet with bracelets and necklaces of gold and artificial stones; it was rendered tame by kind treatment, and after death the body was embalmed in a sumptuous manner. In other parts of Egypt, however, the animal was held in the greatest abhorrence, and they lost no opportunity of destroying it. See Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, vol. iii. p. 75, seq.

The word here rendered *leviathan* (לִּיָּאָתָן) occurs only in this place and in ch. iii. 8; Ps. lxxiv. 14; civ. 26; Isa. xxvii. 1. In all these places it is rendered *leviathan*, except in Job iii. 8, where it is rendered in the text "their mourning," in the margin, *leviathan*. See Notes on that verse, and comp. Notes on Isa. xxvii. 1. The connexion of the word with the root is not certainly known. Gesenius regards it as derived from לָקַח, to join one's self to any one, and then to wreath, to fold, to curve; and in Arabic *to weave, to twist*, as a wreath or garland; and that the word is applied to an animal that is *wreathed*, or that *gathers itself in folds*—a *twisted animal*. In ch. iii. 8, the word is used to denote some huge, untameable, and fierce monster, and will agree there with the supposition that the crocodile is intended. See Notes on that place. In Ps. lxxiv. 14, the allusion is to Pharaoh, compared with the *leviathan*, and the passage would agree best with the supposition that the allusion was to the crocodile. The crocodile was an inhabitant of the Nile, and it was natural to allude to that in describing a fierce tyrant of Egypt. In Ps. civ. 26, the allusion is to some huge animal of the deep, particularly of the Mediterranean, and the language would apply to any sea-monster. In Isa. xxvii. 1, the allusion is to the king and tyrant that ruled in Babylon, as compared with a dragon or fierce animal. Comp. Notes on that passage, and Rev. xii.

Any of these passages will accord well with the supposition that the crocodile is denoted by the word, or that some fierce, strong, and violent animal, that could involve itself, or that had the appearance of an extended serpent, is referred to. The resemblance between the animal here described and the crocodile, will be farther indicated by the Notes on the particular descriptions in the chapter. ¶ *With an hook*. Implying that the animal here referred to was aquatic, and that it could not be taken in the way in which fish were usually caught. It is known now that the crocodile is occasionally taken with a hook, but this is not the usual method, and there is no evidence that it was practised in the time of Job. Herodotus says that it was one of the methods which were used in his time. "Among the various methods," says he, "that are used to take the crocodile, I shall relate only one which deserves most attention; they fix a hook (ἄγκιστρον) on a piece of swine's flesh, and suffer it to float into the middle of the stream. On the banks they have a live hog, which they beat till it cries out. The crocodile, hearing the noise, makes towards it, and in the way encounters and devours the bait. They thus draw it on shore, and the first thing they do is to fill its eyes with clay; it is thus easily manageable, which it otherwise would not be." B. ii. 70. "The manner of taking it in Siam is by throwing three or four strong nets across a river at proper distances from each other, so that if the animal breaks through the first, it may be caught by one of the rest. When it is first taken, it employs the tail, which is the grand instrument of its strength, with great force; but after many unsuccessful struggles, the animal's strength is at length exhausted. Then the natives approach their prisoner in boats, and pierce him with their weapons in the most tender parts, till he is weakened with the loss of blood." *Goldsmith*. From ancient sculptures in Egypt, it appears that the common method of attacking the crocodile was with a spear, transfixing it as it passed beneath the boat in shallow water. See Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the*

2 Canst thou put an hook <sup>b</sup> into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn?

3 Will he make many supplications unto thee? will he speak soft words unto thee?

<sup>b</sup> Is. 37. 29.

*Ancient Egyptians*, vol. iii. p. 75, *seq.* The most common method of taking the crocodile now is by shooting it. *Po-cocke*. It is quite clear, therefore, that, agreeably to what is said in the passage before us, the common method of taking it was not by a hook, and it is probable that in the time of Job this method was not practised. ¶ *Or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down.* Or rather, "Canst thou sink his tongue with a cord?"—that is, Canst thou tame him by a thong or bit thrust into his mouth? *Gesenius*. The idea is that of pressing down the tongue with a cord, so that he would be tractable.

2. *Canst thou put an hook into his nose?* Or rather, a rope, or cord. The word here used (אֶמְסֹךְ) means a caldron, or kettle (Job xli. 20), also a reed, or bulrush, growing in marshy places, and thus a rope made of reeds, a rush-cord. The idea is, that he could not be led about by a cord, as tame animals may be. Mr. Vansittart, however, supposes that the words here are expressive of ornaments, and that the allusion is to the fact mentioned by Herodotus, that the crocodile was led about by the Egyptians as a divinity, and that in this state it was adorned with rings and various stately trappings. There can be no doubt that such a fact existed, but this does not accord well with the scope of the passage here. The object is to impress the mind of Job with a sense of the strength and untameableness of the animal, not to describe the honors which were paid to it. ¶ *Or bore his jaw through with a thorn?* Or with a ring. The word here properly means a thorn, or thorn-bush, Job xxxi. 40; Prov. xxvi. 9; and then also a ring that was put through the nose of an animal, in order to secure it. The instrument was probably made

4 Will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?

5 Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?

sharp like a thorn or spike, and then bent so as to become a ring. Comp. Isa. xxxvii. 29. Mr. Bruce, speaking of the manner of fishing in the Nile, says that when a fisherman has caught a fish, he draws it to the shore, and puts a strong iron ring into its jaw. To this ring is fastened a rope by which the fish is attached to the shore, which he then throws again into the water. *Rosenmüller*.

3. *Will he make many supplications unto thee?* In the manner of a captive begging for his life. That is, Will he quietly submit to you? Prof. Lee supposes that there is an allusion here to the well-known cries of the dolphin when taken; but it is not necessary to suppose such an allusion. The idea is, that the animal here referred to would not tamely submit to his captor. ¶ *Will he speak soft words unto thee?* Pleading for his life in tones of tender and plaintive supplication.

4. *Will he make a covenant with thee?* That is, Will he submit himself to thee, and enter into a compact to serve thee? Such a compact was made by those who agreed to serve another, and the idea here is, that the animal here referred to could not be reduced to such service—that is, could not be tamed. ¶ *Wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?* Canst thou so subdue him that he will be a perpetual slave? The meaning of all this is, that he was an untameable animal, and could not be reduced, as many others could, to domestic use.

5. *Wilt thou play with him as with a bird?* A bird that is tamed. The art of taming birds was doubtless early practised, and they were kept for amusement. But the leviathan could not thus be tamed. ¶ *Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?* For their amuse-

6 Shall the companions make a banquet of him? shall they part him among the merchants?

7 Canst thou fill his skin with

ment. For such purposes, doubtless, birds were caught and caged. There is great force in this question, on the supposition that the crocodile is intended. Nothing could be more incongruous than the idea of securing so rough and unsightly a monster for the amusement of tender and delicate females.

6. *Shall the companions make a banquet of him?* This is one of the "vexed passages" about which there has been much difference of opinion. Gesenius renders it, "Do the companions (*i. e.* the fishermen in company) lay snares for him?" So Noyes renders it. Dr. Harris translates it, "Shall thy partners spread a banquet for him?" The LXX render it, "Do the nations feed upon him?" The Vulgate, "Will friends cut him up?" that is, for a banquet. Rosenmüller renders it, "Will friends feast upon him?" The word rendered "thy companions" (חֲבֵרָיו) means, properly, those joined or associated together for any purpose, whether for friendship or for business. It may refer here either to those associated for the purpose of fishing or feasting. The word "thy" is improperly introduced by our translators, and there is no evidence that the reference is to the companions or friends of Job, as that would seem to suppose. The word rendered "make a banquet" (יָכִי) is from כָּרָה, *hâra*, to dig, and then to make a plot or device against one—derived from the fact that a *pitfall* was dug to take animals (Ps. vii. 16; lvii. 7; comp. Job vi. 27); and according to this it means, "Do the companions, *i. e.* the fishermen in company, lay snares for him?" The word, however, has another signification, meaning to buy, to purchase, and also to give a feast, to make a banquet, perhaps from the idea of *purchasing* the provisions necessary for a banquet. According to this, the meaning is, "Do the companions, *i. e.*

barbed irons? or his head with fish spears?

8 Lay thine hand upon him, remember the battle, do no more.

those associated for the purpose of feasting, make a banquet of him?" Which is the true sense here it is not easy to determine. The majority of versions incline to the idea that it refers to a feast, and means that those associated for eating do not make him a part of their entertainment. This interpretation is the most simple and obvious. ¶ *Shall they part him among the merchants?* That is, Shall they cut him up and expose him for sale? The word rendered "merchants" (תַּרְגִּימִים) means, properly, *Canaanites*. It is used in the sense of *merchants*, or *traffickers*, because the Canaanites were commonly engaged in this employment. See Notes on Isa. xxiii. 8. The crocodile is never made a part of a banquet, or an article of traffic.

7. *Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons?* Referring to its thickness and impenetrability. A common method of taking fish is by the spear; but it is here said that the leviathan could not be caught in this manner. The common method of taking the crocodile now is by shooting him. See Notes on ver. 1. Nothing is more remarkable in the crocodile than the thick and impenetrable skin with which it is covered; and the description here will agree better with this animal than with any other. ¶ *Or his head with fish spears.* The word here rendered "fish spears" (זַרְזִיזִים), means, properly, a *tinkling, clanging*, as of metal or arms, and then any tinkling instrument. Here it evidently refers to some metal spear, or harpoon, and the name was given to the instrument on account of its clanging noise. The LXX render this strangely, referring it to the "Phenicians," or merchants mentioned in the previous verse—"With their whole fleet they could not carry the first skin of his tail, nor his head in their fishing-barks."

8. *Lay thine hand upon him.* Prof. Lee renders this very improperly, as it

9 Behold, the hope of him is in vain: shall not *one* be cast down even at the sight of him?

10 *None is so fierce* that dare stir him up: who then is able to stand before me?

seems to me, "Lay thine hand on thy mouth respecting him," supposing it means that he should be awed into silence by dread of the animal referred to. But the meaning of the passage evidently is, "Endeavor to seize him by laying the hand on him, and you will soon desist from the fearful conflict, and will not renew it." ¶ *Remember the battle.* Remember what a fearful conflict will ensue. Perhaps there is an allusion to some fact fresh in the mind of Job, where such an attempt had been made to secure the leviathan, attended with fearful disaster to those who had made the attempt. ¶ *Do no more.* Or rather, "Thou wilt not do it again." That is, he would be deterred from ever renewing the attempt, or, the conflict would be fatal to him.

9. *Behold, the hope of him is in vain.* That is, the hope of taking him is vain. ¶ *Shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him?* So formidable is his appearance, that the courage of him who would attack him is daunted, and his resolution fails. This agrees well also with the crocodile. There is perhaps scarcely any animal whose appearance would be more likely to deter one from attacking him.

10. *None is so fierce that dare stir him up.* No one has courage to rouse and provoke him. ¶ *Who then is able to stand before me?* The meaning of this is plain. It is, "If one of my creatures is so formidable that man dare not attack it, how can he contend with the great Creator? This may perhaps be designed as a reproof of Job. He had expressed a desire to carry his cause before God, and to urge argument before him in vindication of himself. God here shows him how hopeless must be a contest with the Almighty. Man trembles and is disarmed of his courage by even the sight of one of the creatures

11 Who <sup>c</sup> hath prevented me, that I should repay *him*? *whatsoever* is under the whole heaven is mine. <sup>d</sup>

<sup>c</sup> Ro. 11. 35. <sup>d</sup> Ex. 19. 5. De. 10. 14. Ps. 24. 1; 50. 12. 1 Cor. 10. 26, 28.

of God. Overpowered with fear, he retires from the contemplated contest, and flees away. How then could he presume to contend with God? What hope could he have in a contest with him?

11. *Who hath prevented me?* As this verse is here rendered, its meaning, and the reason why it is introduced, are not very apparent. It almost looks, indeed, as if it were an interpolation, or had been introduced from some other place, and torn from its proper connexion. Dr. Harris proposes to remove the principal difficulty by translating it,

"Who will stand before me, yea presumptuously?"

Whatsoever is beneath the whole heaven is mine.

I cannot be confounded at his limbs and violence,

Nor at his power, or the strength of his frame."

It may be doubted, however, whether the original will admit of this translation. Rosenmüller, Umbreit, and Noyes, unite in supposing the meaning to be, "Who has done me a favor, that I must repay him?" But perhaps the true idea of the passage may be arrived at by adverting to the meaning of the word rendered "prevented"—*נָקַדְתִּי*. It properly means in Piel, to go before; to precede; to anticipate. Ps. xvii. 13, cxix. 148. Then it means to rush upon suddenly; to seize; to go to meet any one either for succour, Ps. lix. 11, or for a different purpose. Isa. xxxvii. 33, "No shield shall come up against her" (*הַמָּגָן*), i. e., against the city. So Job xxx. 27, "The days of affliction prevented me." A similar meaning occurs in the Hiphil form in Amos ix. 10, "The evil shall not overtake us nor prevent us;" that is, shall not rush upon as if by anticipation, or when we are off our guard. If some idea of this kind

12 I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion.

be supposed to be conveyed by the word here, it will probably express the true sense. "Who is able to seize upon me suddenly, or when I am off my guard; to anticipate my watchfulness and my power of resistance, so as to *compel* me to recompense him, or so to overmaster me as to lay me under obligation to confer on him the favors which he demands?" There may be an allusion to the manner in which wild beasts are taken, when the hunter springs his gin suddenly, anticipates the power of the animal, rushes unexpectedly upon him, and compels him to yield. God says that no one could thus surprise and overpower him. Thus explained, the sentiment agrees with the argument which the Almighty is presenting. He is showing his right to reign and do all his pleasure. He appeals, in proof of this, to his great and mighty works, and especially to those specimens of the animal creation which *man* could not tame or overcome. The argument is this: "If man cannot surprise and subdue these creatures of the Almighty, and compel *them* to render him service, how can he expect to constrain the Creator himself to be tributary to him, or to grant him the favors which he demands?" ¶ Whatsoever is *under the whole heaven is mine*. That is, "All belong to me; all are subject to me; all are mine, to be conferred on whom I please. No one can claim them as his own; no one can wrest them from me." This claim to the proprietorship of all created things, is designed *here* to show to Job that over a Being thus supreme man could exert no control. It is his duty, therefore, to submit to him without a murmur, and to receive with gratitude what he chooses to confer.

12. *I will not conceal his parts.* This is the commencement of a more particular description of the animal than had been before given. In the previous part of the chapter, the remarks are general, speaking of it merely as one of

13 Who can discover the face of his garment? or who can come to him with his double bridle?

<sup>1</sup> or, *within*.

great power, and not to be taken by any of the ordinary methods. A description follows of the various parts of the animal, all tending to confirm this general impression, and to fill the hearer with a deep conviction of his formidable character. The words rendered "I will not conceal," mean "I will not be silent;" that is, he would speak of them. The description which follows of the "parts" of the animal, refers particularly to his mouth, his teeth, his scales, his eyelids, his nostrils, his neck, and his heart. ¶ *Nor his comely proportion.* The crocodile is not an object of beauty, and the animal described here is not spoken of as one of beauty, but as one of great power and fierceness. The phrase here used (חֵן עֲרִי) means, properly, "the grace of his armature," or the beauty of his armor. It does not refer to the beauty of the animal as such, but to the armor or defence which it had. Though there might be no beauty in an animal like the one here described, yet there might be a "grace" or fitness in its means of defence which could not fail to attract admiration. This is the idea in the passage. So Gesenius, Umbreit, and Noyes render it.

13. *Who can discover the face of his garment?* Literally, "Who can reveal the face, i. e. the appearance, of his garment?" This "garment" is undoubtedly his skin. The meaning seems to be, "His hard and rough skin is his defence, and no one can so strip off that as to have access to him." The word rendered "discover" (נִקְּה) means to make naked; then to reveal; and the idea is, that he cannot be made naked of that covering, or deprived of it so that one could attack him. ¶ *Or who can come to him with his double bridle?* Marg., *within*. Gesenius renders this, "The doubling of his jaws;" that is, his double row of teeth. Umbreit, "His double bit." Noyes, "Who will

14 Who can open the doors of his face? his teeth *are* terrible round about.

15 *His scales*<sup>1</sup> *are his pride*, shut up together *as with* a close seal.

<sup>1</sup> *strong pieces of shields.*

approach his jaws?" So Rosenmüller. Schultens and Prof. Lee, however, suppose it means that no one can come near to him and *double the bit* upon him, i. e. cast the bit or noose over his nose, so as to secure him by doubling it, or passing it around him. The former seems to me to be the true meaning. "Into the doubling of his jaws, who can enter?" That is, Who will dare approach a double row of teeth so formidable? The word rendered "bridle" (רֶמֶשׁ) means, properly, a curb or halter, which goes over a horse's nose, and hence a bit or bridle. But it may be used to denote the interior of the mouth, the jaws, where the bit is placed, and then the phrase denotes the double row of teeth of the animal. Thus the description of the "parts of defence" of the animal is kept up.

14. *Who can open the doors of his face?* His mouth. The same term is still used to denote the mouth—from its resemblance to a door. The idea is, that no one would dare to force open his mouth. This agrees better with the crocodile than almost any other animal. It would not apply to the whale. The crocodile is armed with a more formidable set of teeth than almost any other animal. See the description in the Notes on ver. 1. Bochart says that it has sixty teeth, and those much larger than in proportion to the size of the body. Some of them he says, stand out; some of them are serrated, or like a saw, fitting into each other when the mouth is closed; and some come together in the manner of a comb, so that the grasp of the animal is very tenacious and fearful. See a full description in Bochart.

15. *His scales are his pride.* Marg., *strong pieces of shields.* The literal translation of this would be, "Pride,

16 One is so near to another, that no air can come between them.

17 They are joined one to another, they stick together, that they cannot be sundered.

the strong of shields;" that is, the strong shields. There can be no doubt that there is reference to the scales of the animal, as having a resemblance to strong shields laid close to each other. But there is considerable variety of opinion as to its meaning. Umbreit and Prof. Lee take the word here rendered "pride" (רָאָה) to be the same as (רָאָה), *back*, and then the meaning would be, that his back was armed as with a shield—referring, as Prof. Lee supposes, to the dorsal fin of the whale. But there is no necessity for this supposition, and it cannot be denied that it is somewhat forced. The *connexion* requires that we should understand it, not of the dorsal fin, but of the scales; for a description immediately follows in continuation of this, which will by no means apply to the fin. The obvious and proper meaning is, that the pride or glory of the animal—that on which his safety depended, and which was the most remarkable thing about him—was his *scales*, which were laid together like firm and compact shields, so that nothing could penetrate them. This description accords better with the crocodile than with any other animal. It is covered with scales, "which are so hard as to resist a musket-ball." *Ed. Ency.* The description cannot be applied to a whale, which has no scales; and accordingly Prof. Lee supposes that the reference in this verse and the two following is not to the *scales*, but to the *teeth*, and to "the setting in of the dorsal fin!" ¶ *Shut up together.* Made close or compact. ¶ *As with a close seal.* As if they had been sealed with wax, so that no air could come between them.

17. *They are joined one to another* Literally, "A man with his brother;" that is, each one is connected with another. There is no natural fastening



18 By his neesings a light doth shine, and his eyes *are* like the eyelids of the morning.

19 Out of his mouth go burn-

of one scale with another, but they lie so close and compact that they seem thus to be fastened down on one another. See Bochart on this verse. It is this which makes the crocodile so difficult to be killed. A musket-ball will penetrate the skin under the belly, which is there less firmly protected; and accordingly the efforts of those who attempt to secure them are directed to that part of the body. A ball in the eye or throat will also destroy it, but the body is impervious to a spear or a bullet.

18. *By his neesings a light doth shine.* The word rendered "neesings" means, properly, *sneezing*, and the literal sense here would be, "His sneezings, light shines." Coverdale renders it, "His nesinge is like a glisteringe fyre." Bochart says that the meaning is, "that when the crocodile sneezes, the breath is driven through the nostrils with such force that it seems to scintillate, or emit fire." Probably the meaning is, that when the animal emits a sudden sound, like sneezing, the fire seems to flash from the eye. There is some quick and rapid motion of the eyes, which in the rays of the sun seem to flash fire. The sneezing of the crocodile is mentioned by Aristotle. *Prof. Lee.* Amphibious animals, the longer they hold their breath under water, respire so much the more violently when they emerge, and the breath is expelled suddenly and with violence. *Schultens.* This is the action here referred to—the strong effort of the animal to recover breath when he rises to the surface, and when in the effort the eyes seem to scintillate, or emit light. ¶ *And his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.* The "eyelids of the morning" is a beautiful poetic phrase quite common in Hebrew poetry. The eyes of the crocodile are small, but they are remarkable. When he lifts his head above water, his staring eyes are the

ing lamps, *and* sparks of fire leap out.

20 Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as *out* of a seething pot or caldron.

first things that strike the beholder, and may then with great beauty be compared with the morning light. There is a remarkable coincidence here, in the fact that when the Egyptians would represent the morning by a hieroglyphic, they painted a crocodile's eye. The reason assigned for this was, that before the whole body of the animal appeared, the eyes seemed to rise from the deep. See Bochart on the passage, *Hieroz.*, and also Horapollon, *Hieroglyph.* i. c. 65.

19. *Out of his mouth go burning lamps.* The word "lamps" here is probably used to denote *torches*, or *fire-brands*. The animal is here described as in pursuit of his prey on land; and the description is exceedingly graphic and powerful. His mouth is then open; his jaws are distended; his breath is thrown out with great violence; his blood is inflamed, and the animal seems to vomit forth flames. The description is, of course, to be regarded as figurative. It is such as one would be likely to give who should see a fierce animal pressing on in pursuit of its prey. ¶ *And sparks of fire leap out.* There is an appearance like sparks of fire. The animal, with an open throat highly inflamed, seems to breathe forth flames. The figure is a common one applied to a war-horse. Thus Ovid:

"From their full racks the generous steeds retire,  
Dropping ambrosial foam and snorting fire."  
DR. GOOD

The same thing is remarked by Achilles Tatius, of the hippopotamus. "With open nostrils, and breathing smoke like fire (*πυρώδη καπνόν*) as from a fountain of fire." And in Eustathius it is said, "They have an open nostril, breathing forth smoke like fire from a furnace" — *πυρώδη καπνόν, ὡς ἐκ καμίνου πνέοντα*. See Bochart.

20. *Out of his nostrils goeth smoke.* See the quotations on ver. 19. This

21 His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth.

22 In his neck remaineth strength, and sorrow <sup>1</sup> is turned

<sup>1</sup> rejoiceth.

appearance of the crocodile, or alligator, has been often noticed. Bertram, in his *Travels in North and South Carolina*, p. 116, says, "While I was seeking a place of rest, I encountered an alligator, that in the neighbouring lake rushed through the canes that grew on its banks. He inflated his enormous body, and swung his tail high in the air. A thick smoke streamed from his wide-open nostrils, with a sound that made the earth tremble." Rosenmüller, *Alte u. neue Morgenland*, No. 778. ¶ *As out of a seething pot.* A pot that is boiling. Literally, "a blown pot;" that is, a pot under which the fire is blown, or kindled. ¶ *Or caldron.* Any kettle. The same word is used to denote a reed or bulrush, or a rope made of reeds. Isa. ix. 13; Job xli. 2.

21. *His breath kindleth coals.* It seems to be a flame, and to set on fire all around it. So Hesiod, *Works* i. 319, describing the creation of the Chimæra, speaks of it as

πνέονσαν ἀμαιμάκετον πῦρ.

"breathing unquenchable fire." So Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 140:

"Hæc loca non tauri spirantes naribus ignem Invertere."

"Bulls breathing fire these furrows ne'er have known." WARTON.

A similar phrase is found in a sublime description of the anger of the Almighty, in Ps. xviii. 8:

"There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, And fire out of his mouth devoured: Coals were kindled by it."

22. *In his neck remaineth strength.* That is, strength is permanently residing there. It is not assumed for the moment, but his neck is so constructed as to be the abode of strength. The word here rendered "remaineth" (רָחַץ), means properly to pass the night; then to abide or dwell; and there is a designed contrast here with what is said of "sorrow" in this verse. This de-

into joy before him.

23 The <sup>2</sup> flakes of his flesh are joined together: they are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved.

<sup>2</sup> fallings.

scription of strength residing in the neck, agrees well with the crocodile. See the figure of the animal on p. 267. It is not easy, however, to see how this is applicable to the whale, as Prof. Lee supposes. The whale is endowed, indeed, with great strength, as Prof. Lee has shown, but that strength is manifested mainly by the stroke of the tail. ¶ *And sorrow is turned into joy before him.* Marg., *rejoiceth.* The proper meaning of the word here used (רָחַץ) is to dance, to leap, to skip; and the sense is, that "terror dances before him." It does not refer to the motion of the animal, as if he were brisk and rapid, but it is a poetic expression, as if terror played or danced along wherever he came. Strength resided in his neck, but his approach made terror and alarm play before him wherever he went; that is, produced terror and dread. In his neck is permanent, calm strength; before him, everything trembles and is agitated. The beauty of the passage lies in this contrast between the strength and firmness which repose calmly in the neck of the animal, and the consternation which he everywhere produces, causing all to tremble as he approaches. Bochart has well illustrated this from the classic writers.

23. *The flakes of his flesh are joined together.* Marg., *fallings.* The Hebrew word here used means anything falling, or pendulous, and the reference here is, probably, to the pendulous parts of the flesh of the animal; the flabby parts; the dew-laps. In animals commonly these parts about the neck and belly are soft, pendulous, and contribute little to their strength. The meaning here is, that in the leviathan, instead of being thus flabby and pendulous, they were compact and firm. This is strikingly true of the crocodile. The belly is, indeed, more soft and penetrable than

24 His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone.

25 When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid: by reason of breakings they purify

themselves.

26 The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the spear, the dart, nor the <sup>1</sup> habergeon.

<sup>1</sup> or, breastplate.

the other parts of the body, but there is nothing like the soft and pendulous dew-laps of most animals.

24. *His heart is as firm as a stone.* As hard; as solid. Bochart remarks that the word *heart* here is not to be regarded as denoting the *courage* of the animal, as it sometimes does, but the heart literally. The statement occurs in the description of the various parts of the animal, and the object is to show that there was peculiar firmness or solidity in every one of his members. There is peculiar firmness or strength needed in the *hearts* of all animals, to enable them to propel the blood through the arteries of the body; and in an animal of the size of the crocodile, it is easy to see that the heart must be made capable of exerting vast force. But there is no reason to suppose that the affirmation here is made on the supposition that there is need of extraordinary strength in the heart to propel the blood. The doctrine of the circulation of the blood was not then known to mankind, and it is to be presumed that the argument here would be based on what *was* known, or what might be easily observed. The presumption therefore is, that the statement here is based on what had been *seen* of the remarkable compactness and firmness of the heart of the animal here referred to. Probably there was nothing so peculiar in the heart of the crocodile that this description would be applicable to that animal alone, but it is such, doubtless, as would apply to the heart of any animal of extraordinary size and strength. ¶ *Yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone.* The mills commonly used in ancient times were hand-mills. See a description of them in the Notes on Matt. xxiv. 41. *Why* the lower stone was the hardest, is not quite apparent. Perhaps a more solid stone

might have been chosen for this, because it was supposed that there was more wear on the lower than the upper stone, or because its weight would make the machine more solid and steady.

25. *When he raiseth up himself.* When he rouses himself for an attack or in self-defence. ¶ *The mighty are afraid.* The Vulgate renders this "*angels.*" The meaning is, that he produces alarm on those who are unaccustomed to fear. ¶ *By reason of breakings they purify themselves.* This, though a literal translation, conveys no very clear idea, and this rendering is not necessary. The word rendered "breakings" (שִׁבְרִים) means, properly, a breaking, breach, puncture; a breaking down, destruction; and then it may mean a *breaking down of the mind*, i. e. *terror*. This is evidently the meaning here. "By reason of the prostration of their courage, or the crushing of the mind by alarm." The word rendered "purify themselves" (נִצְּתוּ) means in Kal *to miss*, as a mark; to sin; to err. In the form of Hith-pael, which occurs here, it means, to miss one's way; *to lose one's self*; and it may refer to the astonishment and terror by which one is led to miss his way in precipitate flight. Gesenius. The meaning then is, "They lose themselves from terror." They know not where to turn themselves; they flee away with alarm. See Rosenmüller *in loc.*

26. *The sword of him that layeth at him.* The word "sword" here (חֶרֶב) means, undoubtedly, *harpoon*, or a sharp instrument by which an attempt is made to pierce the skin of the monster. ¶ *Cannot hold.* That is, in the hard skin. It does not penetrate it. ¶ *The spear, the dart.* These were doubtless often used in the attempt to take the animal. The meaning is, that *they*

27 He esteemeth iron as straw, *and* brass as rotten wood.

28 The arrow cannot make him flee: slingstones are turned with him into stubble.

29 Darts are counted as stub-

would not hold or stick to the animal. They flew off when hurled at him. ¶ *Nor the habergeon.* Marg., *breastplate.* Noyes, *javelin.* Prof. Lee, *lance.* Vulgate, *thorax, breastplate.* So the LXX, *ῥώματα.* The word here used (רֶחֱוִי), the same as רֶחֱוִי (1 Sam. xvii. 5, 38; Neh. iv. 16; 2 Chron. xxvi. 14), means, properly, a *coat of mail*, and is so called from its shining—from רָחַץ, *to shine.* It is not used in the sense of spear or javelin elsewhere, though perhaps it may have that meaning here—denoting a *bright or shining* weapon. This agrees best with the connexion.

27. *He esteemeth iron as straw.* He regards instruments made of iron and brass as if they were straw or rotten wood. That is, they make no impression on him. This will agree better with the crocodile than any other animal. So hard is his skin, that a musket-ball will not penetrate it. See numerous quotations proving the hardness of the skin of the crocodile, in Bochart.

28. *The arrow.* Heb., “the son of the bow.” So Lam. iii. 13, *margin.* This use of the word *son* is common in the Scriptures and in all Oriental poetry. ¶ *Slingstones.* The sling was early used in war and in hunting, and by skill and practice it could be so employed as to be a formidable weapon. See Judges xx. 16; 1 Sam. xvii. 40, 49. As one of the weapons of attack on a foe it is mentioned here, though there is no evidence that the sling was ever actually used in endeavouring to destroy the crocodile. The meaning is, that all the common weapons used by men in attacking an enemy had no effect on him. ¶ *Are turned with him into stubble.* Produce no more effect on him than it would to throw stubble at him.

29. *Darts are counted as stubble.* The word rendered “darts” (רֶחֱוִי) occurs

ble: he laugheth at the shaking of a spear.

30 Sharp <sup>1</sup> stones are under him: he spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire.

<sup>1</sup> *pieces of potsherd.*

nowhere else in the Scriptures. It is from רָחַץ, obs. root, to beat with a club. The word here probably means clubs. Darts and spears are mentioned before, and the object seems to be, to enumerate all the usual instruments of attack. The singular is used here with a plural verb in a collective sense.

30. *Sharp stones are under him.* Marg., as in Heb., “*pieces of potsherd.*” The Hebrew word (רֶחֱוִי, *hhäddûdh*) means sharp, pointed, and the phrase here used means, the *sharp points of a potsherd*, or broken pieces of earthenware. The reference is, undoubtedly, to the scales of the animal, which were rough and pointed, like the broken pieces of earthenware. This description would not agree with the whale, and indeed will accord with no other animal so well as with the crocodile. The meaning is, that the under parts of his body, with which he rests upon the mire, are made up of sharp, pointed things, like broken pottery. ¶ *He spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire.* That is, when he rests or stretches himself on the mud or slime of the bank of the river. The word here used and rendered “sharp pointed things” (רֶחֱוִי), means, properly, something *cut in*; then, something sharpened or pointed; and is used to denote a *threshing sledge*. See this instrument described in Notes on Isa. xxviii. 27, 28, xli. 15. It is not certain, however, that there is any allusion here to that instrument. It is rather to anything that is rough or pointed, and refers to the lower part of the animal as having this character. The Vulgate renders this, “Beneath him are the rays of the sun, and he repositeth on gold as on clay.” Dr. Harris, Dr. Good, and Prof. Lee, suppose it refers to what the animal lies on, meaning, that he lies on splinters of rock and

31 He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment.

32 He maketh a path to shine after him; *one* would think the deep to be hoary.

broken stone with as much readiness and ease as if it were clay. But the above seems to me to be the true interpretation. It is that of Gesenius, Rosenmüller, and Umbreit. Grotius understands it as meaning that the weapons thrown at him lie around him like broken pieces of pottery.

31. *He maketh the deep to boil like a pot.* In his rapid motion through it. The word "deep" (תַּבַּיִת) may refer to any deep place—either of the sea, of a river, or of mire. Ps. lxix. 3. It is applied to the depths of the sea, Jonah ii. 4; Micah vii. 19; but there is nothing in the word that will prevent its application to a large river like the Nile—the usual abode of the crocodile. ¶ *He maketh the sea.* The word "sea" (יָם) is often applied to a large river, like the Nile or the Euphrates. See Notes, Isa. xix. 5. ¶ *Like a pot of ointment.* When it is mixed, or stirred together. Bochart supposes that there is an allusion here to the smell of musk, which, it is said, the crocodile has, and by which the waters through which he passes seem to be perfumed. But the allusion seems rather to be merely to the fact, that the deep is agitated by him when he passes through it, as if it were stirred from the bottom like a pot of ointment.

32. *He maketh a path to shine after him.* This refers, doubtless, to the white foam of the waters through which he passes. If this were spoken of some monster that commonly resides in the ocean, it would not be unnatural to suppose that it refers to the phosphoric light, such as is observed when the waters are agitated, or when a vessel passes rapidly through them. If it refers, however, to the crocodile, the allusion must be understood of the hoary appearance of the Nile, or the lake where he is found. ¶ *One would think*

33 Upon earth there is not his like, who <sup>1</sup> is made without fear.

34 He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride.

<sup>1</sup> or, *behave themselves without fear.*

*the deep to be hoary.* Homer often speaks of the sea as πολλὴν θάλασσαν—"the hoary sea." So Apollonius, speaking of the Argonauts, Lib. i. 545:

—μακραί δ' αἰὲν ἐλευκαίνοντο κέλευθοι—

"The long paths were always white."

So Catullus, in *Epith. Pelei*:

"Totaque remigio spumis incanuit unda."

And Ovid, *Epis. Ceno*:

"—remis eruta canet aqua."

The rapid motion of an aquatic animal through the water will produce the effect here referred to.

33. *Upon earth there is not his like.* Heb., "Upon the dust." The meaning is, that no other animal can be compared with him; or the land does not produce such a monster as this. For size, strength, ferocity, courage, and formidableness, no animal will bear a comparison with him. This can be true only of some such fierce creature as the crocodile. ¶ *Who is made without fear.* Marg., "Or, *behave themselves without fear.*" The meaning is, that he is created not to be afraid; he has no dread of others. In this respect he is unlike other animals. The LXX render this, "He is made to be sported with by my angels."

34. *He beholdeth all high things.* That is, he looks down on everything as inferior to him. ¶ *He is a king over all the children of pride.* Referring, by "the children of pride," to the animals that are bold, proud, courageous—as the lion, the panther, &c. The lion is often spoken of as "the king of the forest," or "the king of beasts," and in a similar sense the leviathan is here spoken of as at the head of the animal creation. He is afraid of none of them; he is subdued by none of them; he is the prey of none of them. The whole argument, therefore, closes with this statement, that he is at the head of the animal creation; and it was by

this magnificent description of the power of the creatures which God had made, that it was intended to impress the mind of Job with a sense of the majesty and power of the Creator. It had the effect. He was overawed with a conviction of the greatness of God, and he saw how wrong it had been for him to presume to call in question the justice, or sit in judgment on the doings, of such a Being. God did not, indeed, go into an examination of the various points which had been the subject of controversy; he did not explain the nature of his moral administration so as to relieve the mind from perplexity; but he evidently meant to leave the impression that he was vast and incomprehensible in his government, infinite in power, and had a right to dispose of his creation as he pleased. No one can doubt that God *could*, with infinite ease, have so explained the nature of his administration as to free the mind from perplexity, and so as to have resolved the difficulties which hung over the various subjects which had come into debate between Job and his friends. *Why* he did not do this, is nowhere stated, and can only be the subject of conjecture. It is possible, however, that the following suggestions may do something to show the reasons why this was not done. (1.) We are to remember the early period of the world when these transactions occurred, and when this book was composed. It was in the infancy of society, and when little light had gleamed on the human mind in regard to questions of morals and religion. (2.) In that state of things, it is not probable that either Job or his friends would have been able to comprehend the principles in accordance with which the wicked are permitted to flourish and the righteous are so much afflicted, if they had been stated. Much higher knowledge than they then possessed about the future world was necessary to understand the subject which then agitated their minds. It could not have been done without a very decided reference to the future state, where all these inequalities are to be removed. (3.) It has been the general plan of God to communicate knowledge by de-

grees, to impart it when men have had full demonstration of their own imbecility, and when they feel their need of divine teaching; and to reserve the great truths of religion for an advanced period of the world. In accordance with this arrangement, God has been pleased to keep in reserve, from age to age, certain great and momentous truths, and such as were particularly adapted to throw light on the subjects of discussion between Job and his friends. They are the truths pertaining to the resurrection of the body; the retributions of the day of judgment; the glories of heaven and the woes of hell, where all the inequalities of the present state may receive their final and equal adjustment. These great truths were reserved for the triumph and glory of Christianity; and to have stated them in the time of Job would have been to have anticipated the most important revelations of that system. The truths of which we are now in possession would have relieved much of the perplexity then felt, and solved most of those questions; but the world was not then in the proper state for their revelation. (4.) It was a very important lesson to be taught men, to bow with submission to a sovereign God, without knowing the reason of his doings. No lesson, perhaps, could be learnt of higher value than this. To a proud, self-confident, philosophic mind, a mind prone to rely on its own resources, and trust to its own deductions, it was of the highest importance to inculcate the duty of submission to *will* and to *sovereignty*. This is a lesson which we often have to learn in life, and which almost all the trying dispensations of Providence are fitted to teach us. It is not because God *has* no reason for what he does; it is not because he intends we shall never *know* the reason; but it is because it is our *duty* to bow with submission to his *will*, and to acquiesce in his right to reign, even when we cannot see the reason of his doings. Could we *reason it out*, and then submit *because we saw* the reason our submission would not be to our Maker's pleasure, but to the deductions of our own minds. Hence, all along, he so deals with man, by concealing the

reason of his doings, as to bring him to submission to his authority, and to humble all human pride. To this termination all the reasonings of the Almighty in this book are conducted; and after the exhibition of his power in the tempest; after his sublime description of his own works; after his appeal to the numerous things which are, in fact, incomprehensible by man; we feel that God is GREAT—that it is presumptuous in man to sit in judgment on his works—and that the mind, no matter what he does, should bow before him with profound veneration and silence. These are the great lessons which we are every day called to learn in the actual dispensations of his pro-

vidence; and the *arguments* for these lessons were never elsewhere stated with so much power and sublimity as in the closing chapters of the book of Job. We have the light of the Christian religion; we can look into eternity, and see how the inequalities of the present order of things can be adjusted there; and we have sources of consolation which neither Job nor his friends enjoyed; but still, with all this light, there are numerous cases where we are required to bow, not because we see the *reason* of the divine dealings, but because such is the *will* of God. To us, in such circumstances, this argument of the Almighty is adapted to teach the most salutary lessons.

## CHAPTER XLII.

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTER.

THIS closing chapter of the book is composed partly of poetry and partly of prose. The first part comprises the first six verses, and consists of the confession of Job that he had erred. He is convinced by the reasoning of the Almighty that all things are under his control, and that none of his purposes can be hindered (ver. 2, *margin*); he acknowledges that he himself had uttered things which he did not understand, and had undertaken the discussion of things which were too high for him, and deserved the reproof of having "darkened counsel by words without knowledge," ver. 3; he confesses his error in having with so bold and irreverent a spirit called on God to enter on a trial, and having wished to argue his case himself before God (see Notes on ver. 4); he says that he now has new views of the Almighty—as different from those which he formerly had, as was that between a thing of which a man had only a distant rumour and what he saw, ver. 5; and now having "seen" God, he saw himself to be vile, and repented in dust and ashes. Thus the effect which it was desired to produce on Job was accomplished. The improprieties in which he had indulged were rebuked; he was brought to true repentance, and showed that he was truly a good man, and that, notwithstanding all that he had said under excited feeling, and in the bitterness of his anguish, he had at heart a profound reverence for God, and supreme submission to his will.

The second part of the chapter (vs. 7—16) is in prose, and contains the statement of the result of the whole trial. The Almighty pronounces the friends of Job to be in error in the opinions which they had maintained respecting his dispensations, and decides in favor of Job in the controversy, ver. 7. This decision involves the conclusion, that trials in this life are *not* certain indications of character; that the fact that a man suffers much is no evidence that he is eminently wicked; and that prosperity is no clear proof that a man is the object of the divine favor. As the friends of Job had defended many sentiments which were erroneous, and manifested a spirit eminently wrong, it was adjudged that it was proper that a sacrifice should be made in acknowledgment of their error; and as they had done much to pain and grieve the heart of Job; and as some act of deference and respect was due to him from them, they are commanded to take a sacrifice of seven bullocks and seven rams, and to go to Job, that he might offer the sacrifice, and intercede for them, vs. 8, 9. The account of the returning prosperity of Job completes the book, vs. 10—16. He is restored to double his former possessions; is honored with the returning affection of all his kindred; is consoled by their sympathy and enriched with their offerings; is blessed with a second family as numerous as the former; lives till he sees a numerous and happy posterity; and dies at last honored and full of days.

**T**HEN Job answered the LORD, and said,

2 I know that thou <sup>a</sup> canst do every thing, and that no thought <sup>1</sup> can be withholden from thee.

3 Who <sup>b</sup> is he that hideth

<sup>a</sup> Ge. 18. 14. Is. 43. 13. Mat. 19. 26.

<sup>1</sup> or, of thine can be hindered. <sup>b</sup> c. 38. 2, 3.

2. *I know that thou canst do every thing.* This is said by Job in view of what had been declared by the Almighty in the previous chapters. It is an acknowledgment that God was omnipotent, and that man ought to be submissive under the putting forth of his infinite power. One great object of the address of the Almighty was to convince Job of his majesty, and that object was fully accomplished. ¶ *And that no thought.* No purpose or plan of thine. God was able to execute all his designs. ¶ *Can be withholden from thee.* Marg., "or, of thine can be hindered." Literally, cut off—כָּצַר. The word, however, means also, to cut off access to, and then, to prevent, hinder, restrain. This is its meaning here. So Gen. xi. 6, "Nothing will be restrained (כָּצַר) from them, which they have imagined to do."

3. *Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge?* This is repeated from ch. xxxviii. 2. As used there, these are the words of the Almighty, uttered as a reproof of Job for the manner in which he had undertaken to explain the dealings of God. See Notes on that verse. As repeated here by Job, they are an acknowledgment of the truth of what is there implied, that he had been guilty of hiding counsel in this manner, and the repetition here is a part of his confession. He acknowledges that he had entertained and expressed such views of God as were in fact clothing the whole subject in darkness instead of explaining it. The meaning is, "Who indeed is it, as thou saidst, that undertakes to judge of great and profound purposes without knowledge? I am that presumptuous man!" Ilgen. ¶ *Therefore have I uttered that I understood not.* I have pronounced an opinion on subjects altogether too profound for my comprehen-

sion. This is the language of true humility and penitence, and shows that Job had at heart a profound veneration for God, however much he had been led away, by the severity of his sufferings, to give vent to improper expressions. It is no uncommon thing for even good men to be brought to see that they have spoken presumptuously of God, and have engaged in discussions and ventured to pronounce opinions on matters pertaining to the divine administration, that were wholly beyond their comprehension.

4 Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I <sup>d</sup> will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. 131. 1; 139. 6.

<sup>d</sup> c. 40. 7.

sion. This is the language of true humility and penitence, and shows that Job had at heart a profound veneration for God, however much he had been led away, by the severity of his sufferings, to give vent to improper expressions. It is no uncommon thing for even good men to be brought to see that they have spoken presumptuously of God, and have engaged in discussions and ventured to pronounce opinions on matters pertaining to the divine administration, that were wholly beyond their comprehension.

4. *Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak.* This is the language of humble, docile submission. On former occasions he had spoken confidently and boldly of God; he had called in question the equity of his dealings with him; he had demanded that he might be permitted to carry his cause before him, and argue it there himself. Notes, ch. xiii. 3, 20—22. Now he is wholly changed. His is the submissive language of a docile child, and he begs to be permitted to sit down before God, and humbly to inquire of him what was truth. *This is true religion.* ¶ *I will demand of thee.* Or rather, "I will ask of thee." The word "demand" implies more than there is of necessity in the original word (שָׁאַל). That means simply to ask, and it may be done with the deepest humility and desire of instruction. That was now the temper of Job. ¶ *And declare thou unto me.* Job was not now disposed to debate the matter, or to enter into a controversy with God. He was willing to sit down and receive instruction from God, and earnestly desired that he would teach him of his ways. It should be added, that very respectable critics suppose that in this verse Job designs to make confession of the im-



5 I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.

propriety of his language on former occasions, in the presumptuous and irreverent manner in which he had demanded a trial of argument with God. It would then require to be rendered as a quotation from his own words formerly:—

"I have indeed uttered what I understood not,  
Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not,  
(When I said) Hear now, I will speak,  
I will demand of thee, and do thou teach me."

This is adopted by Umbreit, and has much in its favor that is plausible; but on the whole the usual interpretation seems to be most simple and proper.

5. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear.* Referring to the indistinct views which we have of anything by merely hearing of it, compared with the clear apprehension which is furnished by sight. Job had had such views of God as one may obtain by being told of him; he now had such views as are furnished by the sight. The meaning is, that his views of God before were dark and obscure. ¶ *But now mine eye seeth thee.* We are not to suppose that Job means to say that he actually saw God, but that his apprehensions of him were clear and bright as if he did. There was no evidence that God appeared to Job in any visible form. He is said, indeed, to have spoken from the whirlwind, but no visible manifestation of JEHOVAH is mentioned.

6. *Wherefore I abhor myself.* I see that I am a sinner to be loathed and abhorred. Job, though he did not claim to be perfect, had yet unquestionably been unduly exalted with the conception of his own righteousness, and in the zeal of his argument, and under the excitement of his feelings when reproached by his friends, had indulged in indefensible language respecting his own integrity. He now saw the error and folly of this, and desired to take the lowest place of humiliation. Com-

6 Wherefore \* I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. <sup>f</sup>

<sup>e</sup> Ez. 9. 6. c. 40. 4. Ps. 51. 17. Je. 31. 19. Ja. 4. 10.  
<sup>f</sup> Da. 9. 3. Mat. 11. 21.

pared with a pure and holy God, he saw that he was utterly vile and loathsome, and was not unwilling now to confess it. ¶ *And repent.* Of the spirit which I have evinced; of the language used in self-vindication; of the manner in which I have spoken of God. Of the general sentiments which he had maintained in regard to the divine administration, as contrasted with those of his friends, he had no occasion to repent, for they were correct (ver. 8), nor had he occasion to repent as if he had never been a true penitent or a pious man. But he now saw that in the spirit which he had evinced under his afflictions, and in his argument, there was much to regret; and he doubtless saw that there had been much in his former life which had furnished occasion for bringing these trials upon him, over which he ought now to mourn. ¶ *In dust and ashes.* In the most lowly manner, and with the most expressive symbols of humiliation. It was customary in times of grief, whether in view of sin or from calamity, to sit down in ashes (see Notes, ch. ii. 8, comp. Dan. ix. 3; Jonah iii. 6; Matt. xi. 21); or on such an occasion the sufferer and the penitent would strew ashes over himself. Comp. Isa. lviii. 5. The philosophy of this was—like the custom of wearing black for mourning apparel—that the external appearance ought to correspond with the internal emotions, and that deep sorrow would be appropriately expressed by disfiguring the outward aspect as much as possible. The sense here is, that Job meant to give expression to the profoundest and sincerest feelings of penitence for his sins. From this effect produced on his mind by the address of the Almighty, we may learn the following lessons: (1.) That a correct view of the character and presence of God is adapted to produce humility and penitence. Comp. ch. xl. 4, 5. This effect was produced on the mind of Peter, when, astonished by a miracle

7 And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is

kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me *the thing that is* right, as my servant Job *hath*.

*g Ps. 51. 4.*

wrought by the Saviour, which none but a divine being could have wrought, he said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Luke v. 8. The same effect was produced on the mind of Isaiah after he had seen Jehovah of Hosts in the temple: "Then said I, Wo is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of Hosts." Isa. vi. 5. No man can have any elevated views of his own importance or purity, who has right apprehensions of the holiness of his Creator. (2.) Such a view of the presence of God will produce what no *argument* can succeed in causing, penitence and humility. The friends of Job had reasoned with him in vain to secure just this state of mind; they had endeavored to convince him that he was a great sinner, and *ought* to exercise repentance. But he met argument with argument; and all their arguments, denunciations, and appeals, made no impression on his mind. When, however, God manifested himself to him, he was melted into contrition, and was ready to make the most penitent and humble confession. So it is now. The arguments of a preacher or a friend often make no impression on the mind of a sinner. He can guard himself against them. He can meet argument with argument, or can coolly turn the ear away. But he has no such power to resist God, and when he manifests himself to the soul, the heart is subdued, and the proud and self-confident unbeliever becomes humbled, and sues for mercy. (3.) A good man will be willing to confess that he is vile, when he has any clear views of God. He will be so affected with a sense of the majesty and holiness of his Maker, that he will be overwhelmed with a sense of his own unworthiness. (4.) The most holy men may have occasion to repent

of their presumptuous manner of speaking of God. We all err in the same way in which Job did. We reason about God with irreverence; we speak of his government as if we could comprehend it; we discourse of him as if he were an equal; and when we come to have any just views of him, we see that there has been much improper boldness, much self-confidence, much irreverence of thought and manner, in our estimation of the divine wisdom and plans. The bitter experience of Job should lead us to the utmost carefulness in the manner in which we speak of our Maker.

7. *And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job.* Had the matter been left according to the record in ver. 6, a wholly erroneous impression would have been made. Job was overwhelmed with the conviction of his guilt, and had nothing been said to his friends, the impression would have been that he was wholly in the wrong. It was important, therefore, and was indeed essential to the plan of the book, that the divine judgment should be pronounced on the conduct of his three friends. ¶ *The LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite.* Eliphaz had been uniformly first in the argument with Job, and hence he is particularly addressed here. He seems to have been the most aged and respectable of the three friends, and in fact the speeches of the others are often a mere echo of his. ¶ *My wrath is kindled.* Wrath, or anger, is often represented as enkindled, or burning. ¶ *For ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.* This must be understood comparatively. God did not approve of *all* that Job had said, but the meaning is, that his general views of his government were just. The main position which he had defended in contradistinction from his friends was correct, for his arguments

8 Therefore take unto you now  
<sup>h</sup> seven bullocks and seven rams,  
 and go to my servant Job, and  
 offer up for yourselves a burnt  
 offering; and my servant Job

<sup>a</sup> Nu. 23. 1.

tended to vindicate the divine character, and to uphold the divine government. It is to be remembered, also, as Bouiller has remarked, that there was a great difference in the circumstances of Job and the three friends—circumstances modifying the degrees of blameworthiness chargeable to each. Job uttered, indeed, some improper sentiments about God and his government; he expressed himself with irreverence and impatience; he used a language of boldness and complaint wholly improper, but this was done in the agony of mental and bodily suffering, and when provoked by the severe and improper charges of hypocrisy brought by his friends. What *they* said, on the contrary, was unprovoked. It was when they were free from suffering, and when they were urged to it by no severity of trial. It was, moreover, when every consideration required them to express the language of condolence, and to comfort a suffering friend.

8. *Therefore take unto you. Or, for yourselves.* ¶ *Seven bullocks and seven rams.* The number *seven* was a common number in offering animals for sacrifice. See Lev. xxiii. 18; Num. xxix. 32. It was not a number, however, confined at all to Jewish sacrifices, for we find that Balaam gave the direction to Balak, king of Moab, to prepare just this number for sacrifice. “And Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven oxen and seven rams.” Num. xxiii. 1, 29. The number *seven* was early regarded as a perfect number, and it was probably with reference to this that that number of victims was selected, with an intention of offering a sacrifice that would be complete or perfect. ¶ *And go to my servant Job.* An acknowledgment of his superiority. It

shall pray <sup>i</sup> for you: for <sup>l</sup> him will I accept: lest I deal with you *after your folly*, in that ye have not spoken of me *the thing which is right*, like my servant Job.

<sup>i</sup> Ja. 5. 16. <sup>l</sup> Jno. 5. 16.

<sup>l</sup> his face, or, person, 1 Sa. 25. 35. Mal. 1. 8.

is probably to be understood, also, that Job would act as the officiating priest in offering up the sacrifice. It is observable that no allusion is made in this book to the priestly office, and the conclusion is obvious that the scene is laid before the institution of that office among the Jews. Comp. Notes on ch. i. 5. ¶ *And offer up for yourselves.* That is, by the aid of Job. They were to make the offering, though Job was evidently to be the officiating priest. ¶ *A burnt offering.* Notes, ch. i. 5. ¶ *And my servant Job shall pray for you.* In connexion with the offering, or as the officiating priest. This is a beautiful instance of the nature and propriety of intercession for others. Job was a holy man; his prayers would be acceptable to God, and his friends were permitted to avail themselves of his powerful intercession in their behalf. It is also an instance showing the nature of the patriarchal worship. It did not consist merely in offering sacrifices. Prayer was to be connected with sacrifices, nor is there any evidence that bloody offerings were regarded as available in securing acceptance with God, except in connexion with fervent prayer. It is also an instance showing the nature of the patriarchal piety. It was *presumed* that Job would be ready to do this, and would not hesitate thus to pray for his “friends.” Yet it could not be forgotten how much they had wounded his feelings; how severe had been their reproaches; nor how confidently they had maintained that he was an eminently bad man. But it was presumed now that Job would be ready to forgive all this; to welcome his friends to a participation in the same act of worship with him, and to pray for them that their sins might be forgiven. Such is religion, alike in the patriarchal

9 So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD <sup>k</sup> also accepted <sup>l</sup> Job.

10 And the LORD turned <sup>1</sup> the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD <sup>2</sup> gave Job twice as much as he

<sup>k</sup> Pr. 3. 11, 12. <sup>1</sup> the face of Job.

<sup>l</sup> Ge. 20. 17. Ps. 14. 7; 126. 1.

<sup>2</sup> added all that had been to Job unto the double.

age and under the gospel, prompting us to be ready to forgive those who have pained or injured us, and making us ready to pray that God would pardon and bless them. ¶ *For him will I accept.* Marg., *his face*, or, *person*. So the Hebrew. So in Gen. xix. 21 (*margin*), comp. Deut. xxviii. 50. The word *face* is thus used to denote the *person*, or man. The meaning is, that Job was so holy and upright that God would regard his prayers. ¶ *Lest I deal with you after your folly.* As their folly had deserved. There is particular reference here to the sentiments which they had advanced respecting the divine character and government.

9. The LORD also accepted Job. Marg., as in ver. 8, *the face of*. The meaning is, that he accepted his prayers and offerings in behalf of his friends.

10. And the LORD turned the captivity of Job. Restored him to his former prosperity. The language is taken from restoration to country and home after having been a captive in a foreign land. This language is often applied in the Scriptures to the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon, and some writers have made use of it as an argument to show that Job lived after that event. But this conclusion is unwarranted. The language is so general that it might be taken from the return from any captivity, and is such as would naturally be employed, in the early periods of the world, to denote restoration from calamity. It was common, in the earliest ages, to convey captives

had before.

11 Then came there unto him all <sup>m</sup> his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold.

<sup>m</sup> c. 19. 13.

in war to the land of the conqueror, and thus make a land desolate by the removal of its inhabitants; and it would be natural to use the language expressive of their return to denote a restoration from any great calamity to former privileges and comforts. Such is undoubtedly its meaning as applied to the case of Job. He was restored from his series of protracted trials to a state of prosperity. ¶ *When he prayed for his friends.* Or after he had prayed for his friends. It is not implied of necessity that his praying for them had any particular effect in restoring his prosperity. ¶ *Also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.* Marg., *added all that had been to Job unto the double.* The margin is a literal translation, but the meaning is the same. It is not to be understood that this occurred at once—for many of these blessings were bestowed gradually. Nor are we to understand it in every respect literally—for he had the same number or sons and daughters as before; but it is a general declaration, and was true in all essential respects.

11. Then came there unto him all his brethren, &c. It seems remarkable that none of these friends came near to him during his afflictions, and especially that his sisters should not have been with him to sympathize with him. But it was one of the bitter sources of his affliction, and one of the grounds of his complaint, that in his trials his kindred stood aloof from him. So in ch. xix. 13, 14, he says, "He hath put my

brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me. My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me." It is not easy to account for this. It may have been, however, that a part were kept from showing any sympathy, in accordance with the general fact, that there are always professed friends, and sometimes kindred, who forsake a man in affliction; and that a part regarded him as abandoned by God, and forsook him on that account—from a mistaken view of what they regarded as duty, that they ought to forsake one whom God had forsaken. When his calamities had passed by, however, and he again enjoyed the tokens of the divine favor, all returned to him full of condolence and kindness; part, probably, because friends always cluster around one who comes out of calamity and rises again to honor, and the other portion, because they supposed that as God regarded him now with approbation, it was proper for them to do it also. A man who has been unfortunate, and who is visited with returning prosperity, never lacks friends. The rising sun reveals many friends that darkness had driven away, or brings to light many—real or professed—who were concealed at midnight. ¶ *And did eat bread with him in his house.* An ancient token of friendship and affection. Comp. Ps. xli. 9; Prov. ix. 5, xxiii. 6; Jer. xli. 1. ¶ *And every man also gave him a piece of money.* This is probably one of the earliest instances in which money is mentioned in history. It is, of course, impossible now to determine the form or value of the "piece of money" here referred to. The Hebrew word (קֶסֶיטָה, *kesitah*), occurs only in this place and in Gen. xxxiii. 19, where it is rendered "pieces of money," and in Josh. xxiv. 32, where it is rendered "pieces of silver." It is evident, therefore, that it was one of the earliest names given to coin, and its use here is an argument that the book of Job is of very early origin. Had it been composed at a later age, the word *shekel*, or some word in common use to denote money, would have been used. The Vulgate here

renders the word *ovem*, a sheep; the LXX, in like manner, ἀμνάδα, a lamb; and so also the Chaldee. In the margin, in both the other places where the word occurs (Gen. xxxiii. 19; Josh. xxiv. 32), it is also rendered *lambs*. The reason why it is so rendered is unknown. It may have been supposed that in early times a sheep or lamb, having something like a fixed value, might have been the standard by which to estimate the value of other things; but there is nothing in the etymology of the word to support this interpretation. The word in Arabic

*kasat*), means to divide out

equally, to measure; and the Hebrew word probably had some such signification, denoting that which was measured or weighed out, and hence became the name of a certain weight or amount of money. It is altogether probable that the first money consisted of a certain amount of the precious metals weighed out, without being coined in any way. It is not an improbable supposition, however, that the figure of a sheep or lamb was the first figure stamped on coins, and this may be the reason why the word here used was rendered in this manner in the ancient versions. On the meaning of the word, Bochart may be consulted, *Hieroz.* P. i. Lib. c. xliii. pp. 433—437; Rosenmüller on Gen. xxxiii. 19; Schultens in loco; and the following work in Ugolin's *Thes. Antig. Sacr.* Tom. xxviii., *Otthonis Sperlingii Diss. de nummis non cunis*, pp. 251—253, 298—306. The arguments of Bochart to prove that this word denotes a piece of money, and not a lamb, as it is rendered by the Vulgate, the LXX, the Syriac, the Arabic, and by Onkelos, are briefly, (1.) That in more than an hundred places where reference is made in the Scriptures to a lamb or a sheep, this word is not used. Other words are constantly employed. (2.) The testimony of the Rabbins is uniform that it denotes a piece of money. Rabbi Akiba says that when he travelled into Africa he found there a coin which they called *kesitu*. So R. Solomon, and Levi Ben Gerson, in their commentaries, and Kimchi, Pomarius, and Aquinas, in

12 So <sup>n</sup> the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had <sup>o</sup> fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand

<sup>n</sup> De. 8. 16. c. 8. 7. Ja. 5. 11. o c. 1. 3.

their Lexicons. (3.) The authority of the Masorites in relation to the Hebrew word is the same. According to Bochart the word is the same as *חָשָׁת*, *hashat*, or *חֹשֶׁת*, *koshet*, changing *sh* for *ch*. The word means true, sincere, Ps. lx. 6; Prov. xxii. 21. According to this, the name was given to the coin because it was made of pure metal—unadulterated silver or gold. See this argument at length in Bochart. (4.) The feminine form of the noun used here shows that it does not mean a lamb—it being wholly improbable that the friends of Job would send him ewe lambs only. (5.) In the early times of the patriarchs—as early as the time of Jacob—money was in common use, and the affairs of merchandise were conducted by that as a medium, Gen. xvii. 12, 13, xlvii. 16. (6.) The statement in Acts vii. 16, leads to the supposition that *money* is referred to by the word as used in Gen. xxxiii. 19. If, as is there supposed, the purchase of the same field is referred to in Gen. xxiii. 16, and xxxiii. 19, then it is clear that money is referred to by the word. In Gen. xxiii. 16, it is said that Abraham paid for the field of Ephron in Macpelah “four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant.” And if the same purchase is referred to in both these places, then by a comparison of the two, it appears that the *hesita* was heavier than the shekel, and contained about four shekels. It is not easy, however, to determine its value. ¶ *And every one an earring of gold.* The word rendered “earring” (אָזְנִיָּה) may mean a ring for the nose (Gen. xxiv. 47; Isa. iii. 21; Prov. xi. 22; Hos. ii. 13), as well as for the ear, Gen. xxxv. 4. The word *ring* would better express the sense here, without specifying its particular use. Comp. Judg. viii. 24, 25; Prov. xxv. 12. Ornaments of this kind were much worn by the ancients (comp.

camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.

13 He had also seven sons and three daughters.

Isa. iii.; Gen. xxiv. 22), and a contribution of these from each one of the friends of Job would constitute a valuable property. Comp. Ex. xxxii. 2, 3. It was not uncommon for friends thus to bring presents to one who was restored from great calamity. See the case of Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxxii. 23.

12. *So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job.* To wit, by giving him double what he had possessed before his calamities came upon him. See ver. 10. ¶ *For he had fourteen thousand sheep, &c.* The possessions which are here enumerated are in each instance just twice as much as he possessed in the early part of his life. In regard to their value, and the rank in society which they indicated, see Notes on ch. i. 3. The only thing which is omitted here, and which it is not said was doubled, was his “household,” or “husbandry” (ch. i. 3, *margin*), but it is evident that this must have been increased in a corresponding manner, to have enabled him to keep and maintain such flocks and herds. We are not to suppose that these were granted to him at once, but as he lived an hundred and forty years after his afflictions, he had ample time to accumulate this property.

13. *He had also seven sons and three daughters.* The same number which he had before his trials. Nothing is said of his wife, or whether these children were, or were not, by a second marriage. The last mention that is made of his wife, is in ch. xix. 17, where he says that “his breath was strange to his wife, though he entreated her for the children’s sake of his own body.” The character of this woman does not appear to have been such as to have deserved farther notice than the fact that she contributed greatly to increase the calamities of her husband. It falls in with the design of the book to notice her only in this respect, and

14 And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name

having done this, the sacred writer makes no farther reference to her. The strong presumption is, that the second family of children was by a second marriage. See Prof. Lee on Job, p. 26. It would not, however, have fallen in with the usual manner in which a wife is mentioned in the Scriptures, to represent her removal as in any circumstances a felicitous event, and, as it could have been represented in no other light, if it had actually occurred, it is delicately passed over in silence. Even under all these circumstances—with a former wife who was impious and unfeeling; who served only to aggravate the woes of her holy and much afflicted husband; who saw him pass through his trials without sympathy and compassion—a second marriage is not mentioned as a desirable event, nor is it referred to as one of the grounds on which Job could felicitate himself on his return to prosperity. The children are mentioned; the whole reference to the second marriage relation, if it occurred, is delicately passed over. Under no circumstances would the sacred penman mention it as an event laying the ground for felicitation.

14. And he called the name of the first, Jemima. It is remarkable that in the former account of the family of Job, the names of none of his children are mentioned, and in this account the names of the daughters only are designated. Why the names of the daughters are here specified, is not intimated. They are significant, and they are so mentioned as to show that they contributed greatly to the happiness of Job on the return of his prosperity, and were among the chief blessings which gladdened his old age. The name *Jemima* (יְמִמָּה) is rendered in the Vulgate, *Diem*, and by the LXX, *Ἡμέραν*, *Day*. The Chaldee adds this remark: "He gave her the name Jemima, because her beauty was like the day." The Vulgate, Septuagint, and Chaldee, evidently regarded the name as derived from *יֹם*, *yom*, day,

of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Keren-happuch.

and this is the most natural and obvious derivation. The name thus conferred would indicate that Job had now emerged from the *night* of affliction, and that returning light shone again on his tabernacle. It was usual in the earliest periods to bestow names because they were significant of returning prosperity (see Gen. iv. 25), or because they indicated hope of what would be in their time (Gen. v. 29), or because they were a pledge of some permanent tokens of the divine favor. See Notes on Isa. viii. 18. Thomas Roe remarks (*Travels*, 425), that among the Persians it is common to give names to their daughters derived from spices, unguents, pearls, and precious stones, or anything which is regarded as beautiful or valuable. See Rosenmüller, *Alte u. neue Morgenland*, No. 779.

¶ And the name of the second, Kezia. The name *Kezia* (קֶזְיָה) means *cassia*, a bark resembling cinnamon, but less aromatic. *Gesenius*. It grew in Arabia, and was used as a perfume. The Chaldee Paraphrast explains this as meaning that he gave her this name because "she was as precious as cassia." Cassia is mentioned in Ps. xlv. 8, as among the precious perfumes. "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia." The agreeableness or pleasantness of the perfume was the reason why the name was chosen to be given to a daughter. ¶ And the name of the third, Keren-happuch. Properly, "*horn of stibium*." The *stibium* (קֶרֶן, *puch*), was a paint or dye, made originally, it is supposed, from sea-weed, and afterwards from antimony, with which females tinged their eye-lashes. See Notes on Isa. liv. 11. It was esteemed as an ornament of great beauty, chiefly because it served to make the eye appear larger. Large eyes are considered in the East as a mark of beauty, and the painting of black borders around them gives them an enlarged appearance. It is remarkable that this species of ornament was known so early as the time of Job, and this is one of the cases

15 And in all the land were no women found *so* fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.

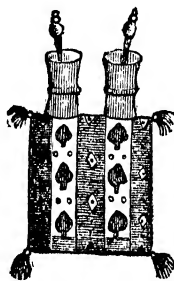
16 After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, *even* four generations.

constantly occurring in the East, showing that fashions there do not change. It is also remarkable that the fact of painting in this manner should have been considered so respectable as to be incorporated into the name of a daughter; and this shows that there was no attempt at *concealing* the habit. This also accords with the customs which prevail still in the East. With us, the materials and instruments of personal adorning are kept in the background, but the Orientals obtrude them constantly on the attention, as objects adapted to suggest agreeable ideas. The *process* of painting the eye is described by a recent traveller to be this: "The eye is closed, and a small ebony

rod smeared with the composition, is squeezed between the lids so as to tinge the edges with the colour. This is considered to add greatly to the brilliancy and power of the eye, and to deepen the effect of the long black eyelashes of which the Orientals are proud. The same drug is employed on their eye-brows; used thus, it is intended to elongate, not to elevate the arc, so that the inner extremities are usually represented as meeting between the eyes. To Europeans the effect is at first seldom pleasing; but it soon becomes so." The following engravings will give a representation of the ancient vessels of stibium and those now in use :



Ancient Vessel and Probe.



Modern utensils for painting the eyes.

5. *And their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.* This is mentioned as a proof of his special regard, and is also recorded because it was not common. Among the Hebrews the daughter inherited only in the case where there was no son. Num. xxviii. 8. The property was divided equally among the sons, with the exception that the eldest received a double portion. See Jahn's *Bib. Arch.* § 168. This custom, prevailing still extensively in the East,

it seems existed in the time of Job, and it is mentioned as a remarkable circumstance that he made his daughters heirs to his property with their brothers. It would also be rather implied in the passage before us that they were equal heirs.

16. *After this lived Job an hundred and forty years.* As his age at the time his calamities commenced is not mentioned, it is of course impossible to determine how old he was when he died.



17 So Job died, <sup>p</sup> *being old* and full of days.

p c. 5. 26.

The LXX, however, have undertaken to determine this, but on what authority is unknown. They render this verse, "And Job lived after this affliction an hundred and seventy years: so that all the years that he lived were two hundred and forty." According to this, his age would have been seventy when his afflictions came upon him; but this is a mere conjecture. Why the authors of that version have added thirty years to the time which he lived after his calamities, making it an hundred and seventy instead of an hundred and forty, as it is in the Hebrew text, is unknown. The supposition that he was about seventy years of age when his calamities came upon him, is not an unreasonable one. He had a family of ten children, and his sons were grown so as to have families of their own. Ch. i. 4. It should be remembered, also, that in the patriarchal times, when men lived to a great age, marriages did not occur at so early a period of life as they do now. In this book, also, though the age of Job is not mentioned, yet the uniform representation of him is that of a man of mature years; of large experience and extended observation; of one who had enjoyed high honor, and a wide reputation as a sage and a magistrate; and when these circumstances are taken into the account, the supposition of the translators of the Septuagint, that he was seventy years old when his afflictions commenced, is not improbable. If so, his age at his death was two hundred and ten years. The age to which he lived is mentioned as remarkable, and was evidently somewhat extraordinary. It is not proper, therefore, to assume that this was the ordinary length of human life at that time, though it would be equally improper to suppose that there was anything like miracle in the case. The fair interpretation is, that he reached the period of old age which was then deemed most honorable; that he was permitted to arrive at what was then regarded as the outer limit of human life; and if this be so, it is not difficult to determine *about* the time when he

lived. The length of human life, after the flood, suffered a somewhat regular decline, until, in the time of Moses, it was fixed at about threescore years and ten. Ps. xc. 10. The following instances will show the regularity of the decline, and enable us, with some degree of probability, to determine the period of the world in which Job lived. Noah lived 950 years; Shem, his son, 600; Arphaxad, his son, 438 years; Salah, 433 years; Eber, 464; Peleg, 239; Reu, 239; Serug, 230; Nahor, 248; Terah, 205; Abraham, 175; Isaac, 180; Jacob, 147; Joseph, 110; Moses, 120; Joshua, 110. Supposing, then, the age of Job to have been somewhat unusual and extraordinary, it would fall in with the period somewhere in the time between Terah and Jacob; and if so, he was probably contemporary with the most distinguished of the patriarchs. ¶ *And saw his sons, &c.* To see one's posterity advancing in years and honor, and extending themselves in the earth, was regarded as a signal honor and a proof of the divine favor in the early ages. Gen. xlviii. 11, "And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face; and lo, God hath also showed me thy seed." Prov. xvii. 6, "Children's children are the crown of old men." Ps. cxxviii. 6, "Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children." Comp. Ps. cxxvii. 5; Gen. xii. 2; xvii. 5, 6; Job v. 25; and Notes on Isa. liii. 10.

17. *So Job died, being old and full of days.* Having filled up the ordinary term of human life at that period of the world. He reached an honored old age, and when he died was not prematurely cut down. He was regarded as an old man. The translators of the Septuagint, at the close of their version, make the following addition: "And it is written that he will rise again with those whom the Lord will raise up. This is translated out of a Syrian book. He dwelt indeed in the land of Ausitis, on the confines of Idumea and Arabia. His first name was Jobab; and having married an Arabian woman, he had by her a son whose name was Ennon.

He was himself a son of Zare, one of the sons of Esau; and his mother's name was Bosorra; so that he was the fifth in descent from Abraham. And these were the kings who reigned in Edom, over which country he also bore rule. The first was Balak, the son of Beor, and the name of his city was Dannaba. And after Balak, Jobab, who is called Job; and after him, Asom, who was governor (*ἡγεμὼν*) from the region of Thaimanitis; and after him, Adad, son of Barad, who smote Madian in the plain of Moab; and the name of his city was Getham. And the friends who came to him were Eliphaz of the sons of Esau, the king of the Thaiman-

ites; Bildad, the sovereign (*ῥόβανος*) of the Sauchians; and Sopher, the king of the Manaïans." What is the authority for this statement is now entirely unknown, nor is it known whence it was derived. The remark with which it is introduced, that it is written that he would be raised up again in the resurrection, looks as if it were a forgery made after the coming of the Saviour, and has much the appearance of being an attempt to support the doctrine of the resurrection by the authority of this ancient book. It is, at all events, an unauthorized addition to the book, as nothing like it occurs in the Hebrew.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS.

WE have now gone through with an exposition of the most ancient book in the world, and the most difficult one in the sacred volume. We have seen how sagacious men reason on the mysterious events of Divine Providence, and how little light can be thrown on the ways of God by the profoundest thinking, or the acutest observation. We have seen a good man subjected to severe trials by the loss of all his property and children, by a painful and loathsome disease, by acute mental sorrows, by the reproaches of his wife, by the estrangement of his surviving kindred, and then by the labored efforts of his friends to prove that he was a hypocrite, and that all his calamities had come upon him as a demonstration that he was at heart a bad man. We have seen that man struggling with those arguments; embarrassed and perplexed by their ingenuity; tortured by the keenness of the reproaches of his friends; and under the excitement of his feelings, and the pressure of his woes, giving vent to expressions of impatience and irreverent reflection on the government of God, which he afterwards had occasion abundantly to regret. We have seen that man brought safely through all his trials; showing that, after all that *they*

had said and that *he* had said and suffered, he was a good man. We have seen the divine interposition in his favor at the close of the controversy; the divine approbation of his general character and spirit; and the divine goodness shown him in the removal of his calamities, in his restoration to health, in the bestowment on him of double his former possessions; and in the lengthening out his days to an honored old age. In his latter days we have seen his friends coming around him again with returning affection and confidence; and a happy family growing up to cheer him in his declining years, and to make him honored in the earth. In view of all these things, and especially of the statements in the chapter which closes the book, we may make the following remarks:

(1.) The upright will be ultimately honored by God and man. God may bring afflictions upon them, and they may *seem* to be objects of his displeasure; but the period will arrive when he will show them marks of his favor. This may not *always*, indeed, be in the present life, but there will be a period when all these clouds will be dissipated, and when the good, the pious, the sincere friends of God, shall enjoy the re-

turning tokens of his friendship. If his approbation of them is declared in no intelligible way in this life, it will be at the day of judgment, in a more sublime manner even than it was announced to Job; if the whole of this life should be dark with storms, yet there is a heaven where, through eternity, there will be pure and unclouded day. In like manner, honor will be ultimately shown to the good and just by the world. At present friends may withdraw; enemies may be multiplied; suspicions may attach to a man's name; calumny and slander may come over his reputation like a mist from the ocean. But things will ultimately work themselves right. A man in the end will have all the reputation which he ought to have. He who has a character that *ought* to be loved, honored, and remembered, will be loved, honored, and remembered; and he who has such a character that he ought to be hated or forgotten, will be. It may not *always*, indeed, be in the present life; but there is a current of public favor and esteem setting towards a good man while living, which always comes up to him when he is dead. The world will do justice to his character, and a holy man, if calumniated while he lives, may safely commit his character to God and to the "charitable speeches" (*Bacon*) of men, and to distant times, when he dies. But in most instances, as in the case of Job, if life is lengthened out, the calumniated, the reproached, and the injured, will find justice done them before they die. Reproaches in early or middle life will be succeeded by a fair and wide reputation in old age; the returning confidence of friends will be all the compensation which this world can furnish for the injury which was done; and the evening of life spent in the enjoyment of friendship and affection, will but precede the entrance on a better life, to be spent in the eternal friendship of God and of all holy beings.

(2.) We should adhere to our integrity when passing through trials. They may be long and severe. The storm that rolls over us may be very dark, and the lightning's flash may be

vivid, and the thunder deep and long. Our friends may withdraw and reproach us: those who should console us may entreat us to curse God and die; one woe may succeed another in rapid succession, and each successive stroke be heavier than the last; years may roll on in which we may find no comfort or peace; but we should not despair. We should not let go our integrity. We should not blame our Maker. We should not allow the language of complaint or murmuring to pass our lips, nor ever doubt that God is good and true. There is a good reason for all that he does; and in due time we shall meet the recompense of our trials and our fidelity. No pious and submissive sufferer ever yet failed of ultimately receiving the tokens of the divine favor and love.

(3.) The expressions of divine favor and love are not to be expected in the midst of angry controversy and heated debate. Neither Job nor his friends appear to have enjoyed communion with God, or to have tasted much of the happiness of religion, while the controversy was going on. They were excited by the discussion; the argument was the main thing; and on both sides they gave vent to emotions that were little consistent with the reigning love of God in the heart, and with the enjoyment of religion. There were high words; mutual criminations and recriminations; strong doubts expressed about the sincerity and purity of each other's character; and many things were said on both sides, as there usually is in such cases, derogatory to the character and government of God. It was only after the argument was closed, and the disputants were silenced, that God appeared in mercy to them, and imparted to them the tokens of his favor. Theological combatants usually enjoy little religion. In stormy debate and heated discussion there is usually little communion with God and little enjoyment of true piety. It is rare that such discussions are carried on without engendering feelings wholly hostile to religion; and it is rare that such a controversy is continued long, in which much is not said on both sides injurious

to God—in which there are not severe reflections on his government, and in which opinions are not advanced which give abundant occasion for bitter regret. In a heated argument a man becomes insensibly more concerned for the success of his cause than for the honor of God, and will often advance sentiments even severely reflecting on the divine government, rather than confess the weakness of his own cause, and yield the point in debate. In such times it is not an inconceivable thing that even good men should be more anxious to maintain their own opinions than to vindicate the cause of God, and would be more willing to express hard sentiments about their Maker than to acknowledge their own defeat.

(4.) From the chapter before us (xlii. 11), we are presented with an interesting fact, such as often occurs. It is this: friends return to us, and become exceedingly kind *after* calamity has passed by. The kindred and acquaintances of Job withdrew when his afflictions were heavy upon him; they returned only with returning prosperity. When afflicted, they lost their interest in him; many of them, perhaps, had been dependent on him, and when his property was gone, and he could no longer aid them, they disappeared of course. Many of them, perhaps, professed friendship for him *because* he was a man of rank, and property, and honor; and when he was reduced to poverty and wretchedness, they also disappeared of course. Many of them, perhaps, had regarded him as a man of piety; but when these calamities came upon him, in accordance with the common sentiments of the age, they regarded him as a bad man, and they also withdrew from him of course. When there were evidences of returning prosperity, and of the renewed favor of God, these friends and acquaintances again returned. Some of them doubtless came back *because* he was thus restored. "Swallow-friends, that are gone in the winter, will return in the spring, though their friendship is of little value." *Henry*. That portion of them who had been sincerely attached to him as a good man, though their

confidence in his piety had been shaken by his calamities, now returned, doubtless with sincere hearts, and disposed to do him good. They contributed to his wants; they helped him to begin the world again; they were the means of laying the foundation of his future prosperity; and in a time of real need their aid was valuable, and they did all that they could to minister consolation to the man who had been so sorely afflicted. In adversity, it is said, a man will know who are his real friends. If this is true, then this distinguished and holy patriarch had few friends who were truly attached to him, and who were not bound to him by some consideration of selfishness. Probably this is always the case with those who occupy prominent and elevated situations in life. True friendship is oftenest found in humble walks and in lowly vales.

(5.) We should overcome the unkindness of our friends by praying for them. See Notes on ch. xlii. 8, 10. This is the true way of meeting harsh reproaches and unkind reflections on our character. Whatever may be the severity with which we are treated by others; whatever charges they may bring against us of hypocrisy or wickedness; however ingenious may be their arguments to prove this, or however cutting their sarcasm and retorts, we should never refuse to pray for them. We should always be willing to seek the blessing of God upon them, and be ready to bear them on our hearts before the throne of mercy. It is one of the privileges of good men thus to pray for their calumniators and slanderers; and one of our highest honors, and it may be the source of our highest joys, is that of being made the instruments of calling down the divine blessing on those who have injured us. It is not that we delight to triumph over them; it is not that we are now proud that we have the evidence of divine favor; it is not that we exult that they are humbled, and that we now are exalted; it is that we may be the means of permanent happiness to those who have greatly injured us.

(6.) The last days of a good man are

not unfrequently his best and happiest days. The early part of his life may be harassed with cares; the middle may be filled up with trials; but returning prosperity may smile upon his old age, and his sun go down without a cloud. His heart may be weaned from the world by his trials; his true friends may have been ascertained by their adhering to him in reverses of fortune, and the favor of God may so crown the evening of his life, that to him, and to all, it shall be evident that he is ripening for glory. God is often pleased also to impart unexpected comforts to his friends in their old age; and though they have suffered much and lost much, and thought that they should never "again see good," yet he often disappoints the expectations of his people, and the most prosperous times come when they thought all their comforts were dead. In the trials through which we pass in life, it is not improper to look forward to brighter and better days, as to be yet possibly our portion in this world; at all events, if we are the friends of God, we may look forward to certain and enduring happiness in the world that is to come.

(7.) The book, through whose exposition we have now passed, is a most beautiful and invaluable argument. It relates to the most important subject that can come before our minds—the government of God, and the principles on which his administration is conducted. It shows how this appeared to the reflecting men of the earliest times. It shows how their minds were perplexed with it, and what difficulties attended the subject after the most careful observation. It shows how little can be accomplished in removing those difficulties by human reasoning, and how little light the most careful observation, and the most sagacious reflections, can throw on this perplexing subject. Arguments more beautiful, illustrations more happy, sentiments more terse and profound, and views of God more large and comprehensive, than those which occur in this book, can be found in no works of philosophy; nor has the human mind in its own efforts ever gone beyond the reasonings

of these sages in casting light on the mysterious ways of God. They brought to the investigation the wisdom collected by their fathers and preserved in proverbs; they brought the results of the long reflection and observation of their own minds; and yet they threw scarce a ray of light on the mysterious subject before them, and at the close of their discussions we feel that the whole question is just as much involved in mystery as ever. So we feel at the end of all the arguments of man without the aid of revelation, on the great subjects pertaining to the divine government over this world. The reasonings of philosophy now are no more satisfactory than were those of Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad, and it may be doubted whether, since this book was written, the slightest advance has been made in removing the perplexities on the subject of the divine administration, so beautifully stated in the book of Job.

(8.) The reasonings in this book show the desirableness and the value of revelation. It is to be remembered that the place which the reasonings in this book should be regarded as occupying, is properly *before* any revelation had been given to men, or before any was recorded. If it is the most ancient book in the world, this is clear; and in the volume of revealed truth it should be regarded as occupying the first place in the order in which the books of revelation were given to man. As introductory to the whole volume of revelation—for so it should be considered—the book of Job is of inestimable worth and importance. It shows how little advance the human mind can make in questions of the deepest importance, and what painful perplexity is left after all the investigations that man can make. It shows what clouds of obscurity rest on the mind whenever man, by himself, undertakes to explain and unfold the purposes of Deity. It shows how little philosophy and careful observation can accomplish to explain the mysteries of the divine dealings, and to give the mind solid peace in the contemplation of the various subjects that so much perplex man. There was no better way of showing this than

that adopted here. A great and good man falls. His comforts all depart. He sinks to the lowest degree of wretchedness. To explain this, and all kindred subjects, his own mind is taxed to the utmost, and four men of distinguished sagacity and extent of observation are introduced—the representatives of the wisdom of the world—to explain the fact. They adduce all that they had learned by tradition, and all that their own observation had suggested, and all the considerations which reason would suggest to them; but all in vain. They make no advances in the explanation, and the subject at the close is left as dark as when they began. Such an effect, and such a train of discussion, is admirably fitted to prepare the mind to welcome the teachings of revelation, and to be grateful for that volume of revealed truth which casts such abundant light on the questions that so perplexed these ancient sages. Before the book of revelation was given, it was well to have on record the result of the best efforts which man could make to explain the mysteries of the divine administration.

As a specimen of early poetry, and an illustration of the early views of science and the state of the arts, of incomparable beauty and sublimity, also, this book is invaluable. Almost four thousand years have passed away since this patriarch lived, and since the arguments recorded in the book were made and recorded. Men have made great advances since in science and the arts. The highest efforts, probably, of which the human mind is capable, have since been made in the department of poetry, and works have been produced destined certainly to live on to the consummation of all things. But the sublimity

and beauty of the poetry in this book stand still unsurpassed, unrivalled. As a mere specimen of composition, apart from all the questions of its theological bearing; as the oldest book in the world; as reflecting the manners, habits, and opinions of an ancient generation; as illustrating more than any other book extant the state of the sciences, the ancient views of astronomy, geology, geography, natural history, and the advances made in the arts, this book has a higher value than can be attached to any other record of the past, and demands the profound attention of those who would make themselves familiar with the history of the race. The theologian should study it as an invaluable introduction to the volume of inspired truth; the humble Christian, to obtain elevated views of God; the philosopher, to see how little the human mind can accomplish on the most important of all subjects without the aid of revelation; the child of sorrow, to learn the lessons of patient submission; the man of science, to know what was understood in the far distant periods of the past; the man of taste, as an incomparable specimen of poetic beauty and sublimity. It will teach invaluable lessons to each advancing generation; and to the end of time true piety and taste will find consolation and pleasure in the study of the book of Job. God grant that this effort to explain it may contribute to this result. To that God who inclined my heart to engage in the attempt to explain this ancient book, and who has given me health, and strength, and the means to prosecute the study with advantage, I now devote this exposition. I trust it may do good to others; it has been profitable and pleasant to my own soul.



# NEW TRANSLATION OF THE BOOK OF JOB.

## PART I.

### CHAP. I.

- 1 There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job.
- 2 And that man was sincere and upright; and one that feared
- 3 God and avoided evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His possessions were seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of cattle, and five hundred she-asses, and a very numerous household; so that this man was the greatest of all the sons of the East.
- 4 And his sons went and made a feast in their houses, each in his day, and they sent and invited their three sisters to eat
- 5 and drink with them. And when the days of feasting had gone round, Job sent for them and sanctified them, and he rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and have cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job constantly.
- 6 And there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before JEHOVAH, and Satan came also among them.
- 7 And JEHOVAH said to Satan, From whence dost thou come? And Satan answered JEHOVAH and said, From rapidly going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it.
- 8 And JEHOVAH said to Satan, Hast thou attentively observed my servant Job? For there is none like him upon the earth, a
- 9 man sincere and upright, fearing God, and avoiding evil. And Satan answered JEHOVAH and said, Is it for nothing that Job
- 10 fears God? Hast thou not made a hedge around him, and around his house, and around all his possessions? The work of his hands thou hast blessed, and his possessions spread over



11 the land. But now only put forth thine hand and smite all  
12 that he possesses, and he will curse thee to thy face. And  
JEHOVAH said to Satan, Lo, all which he has is in thy power;  
but upon himself lay not thy hand. So Satan went forth from  
the presence of JEHOVAH.

13 And the day came when his sons and his daughters were eating  
14 and drinking wine in the house of their elder brother; and a  
messenger came to Job, and said, The cattle were ploughing,  
15 and the she-asses feeding beside them, and the Sabceans  
rushed upon them, and took them away, and slew the young  
men with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped by  
16 myself to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came  
also another, and said, The fire of God hath fallen from heaven,  
and burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed  
17 them; and I only have escaped by myself to tell thee. While  
he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The  
Chaldeans made out three bands, and rushed upon the camels,  
and took them, and slew the young men with the edge of the  
18 sword; and I only am escaped by myself to tell thee. And  
while he was yet speaking there came also another, and said,  
Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine  
19 in the house of their elder brother, and lo! there came a great  
wind from across the desert, and smote upon the four corners  
of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are  
20 dead; and I only am escaped by myself to tell thee. Then  
Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell  
21 upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, Naked came I  
forth from the womb of my mother, and naked I shall return  
there! JEHOVAH gave, and JEHOVAH hath taken away; blessed  
22 be the name of JEHOVAH. In all this Job did not sin, and he  
attributed no wrong to God.

## CHAP. II.

1 And there was a day when the sons of God came to present  
themselves before JEHOVAH, and Satan came also among them,  
2 to present himself also before JEHOVAH. And JEHOVAH said  
to Satan, Whence dost thou come? And Satan answered  
JEHOVAH and said, From rapidly going to and fro in the earth,

- 3 and walking up and down in it. And JEHOVAH said to Satan, Hast thou attentively observed ~~my~~<sup>thy</sup> servant Job, that there is none like him upon the earth, a man sincere and upright, fearing God and avoiding evil? And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou didst excite me against him to destroy
- 4 him without cause. And Satan answered JEHOVAH and said, Skin for skin; and all that which pertains to a man will he give
- 5 for his life. But put forth now thine hand, and smite his bone
- 6 and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. And JEHOVAH said unto Satan, Behold he is in thy hand. Only spare his life.
- 7 And Satan went out from the presence of JEHOVAH, and smote
- 8 Job with a painful ulcer from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took a piece of broken earthen ware to scrape himself with, and he sat down among the ashes.
- 9 Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou talkest as one of the foolish women talk. Shall we then receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this Job sinned not with his lips.
- 10
- 11 And the three friends of Job heard of all the evil which had befallen him, and they came every man from his home: Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, for they had agreed to come together to condole
- 12 with him, and to comfort him. And they lifted up their eyes afar off, and they did not know him. Then they lifted up their voices and wept, and they rent each one his mantle, and
- 13 they threw dust upon their heads towards heaven. And they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spake a word to him, for they saw that his grief was very great.

## PART II.

THE ARGUMENT OR CONTROVERSY IN VERSE. Ch. iii.—xlii. 6.

*The first series in the controversy.* Ch. iii.—xiv.

THE COMPLAINT OF JOB. Ch. iii.

- 1 At length Job opened his mouth, and cursed his day.
- 2 And Job exclaimed and said,
- 3 O that the day might have perished in which I was born;  
And the night which said, "A male child is conceived!"
- 4 That day—let it be darkness!  
Let not God inquire after it from on high!  
Yea, let not the light shine upon it!
- 5 Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it;  
Let a cloud dwell upon it;  
Let whatever darkens the day terrify it.
- 6 That night—let darkness seize upon it!  
Let it not rejoice among the days of the year!  
Let it not come into the number of the months!
- 7 O that night! let it be desolate!  
Let there come in it no sound of joy!
- 8 Let them who curse the day curse it;  
They who are skilful to rouse up Leviathan!
- 9 Let the stars of its twilight be darkened;  
Let it long for the light, and there be none;  
Neither let it see the eyelids of the morning!
- 10 Because it closed not the doors of the womb to me,  
And caused not trouble to be hid from mine eyes!
- 11 Why did I not expire from my birth?  
When I came from the womb why did I not die?
- 12 Why did the knees anticipate me?  
And why the breasts that I should suck?
- 13 For now should I lie down and be quiet;  
I should sleep; then should I be at rest
- 14 With kings and counsellors of the earth,

- Who build lonely places for themselves;  
15 Or with princes that had gold,  
And who filled their houses with silver;  
16 Or as a hidden abortion I had not been,  
As infants which never saw the light.  
17 There the wicked cease from troubling:  
And there the weary are at rest.  
18 There the prisoners rest together;  
They hear not the voice of the oppressor.  
19 The small and the great are there;  
And the servant is free from his master.  
20 Why doth He give light to him that is in misery,  
And life to the bitter in spirit;  
21 Who long for death, and it is not;  
And dig for it more than for hid treasures;  
22 Who rejoice exceedingly—  
Yea, they exult when they can find a grave?  
23 Why to the man whose path is hid,  
And whom God hath hedged up?  
24 For my sighing comes before I eat,  
And my groans are poured forth as the billows.  
25 For I had a great dread, and it came upon me;  
And what I shuddered at overtook me.  
26 I have no peace, and I have no quiet, and I have no respite,  
And such misery as makes me tremble comes.

## CHAPTERS IV. V.

*The first series in the controversy continued.*

THE FIRST SPEECH OF ELIPHAZ IN REPLY TO JOB.

- 1 Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite and said:  
2 If one attempt a word with thee, wilt thou take it ill?  
Yet who can refrain from speaking?  
3 Lo, thou hast admonished many,  
And the feeble hands thou hast strengthened;  
4 The stumbling thy words have upheld,  
And to the feeble knees thou hast given strength.

- 5 But now [affliction] has come upon thee, and thou faintest;  
It toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.
- 6 Is not thy confidence and thy expectation [founded on] thy  
fear of God,  
And on the integrity of thy ways?
- 7 Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished being innocent?  
Or where were the righteous cut off?
- 8 According to what I have seen, they who plough iniquity,  
And sow mischief, reap the same.
- 9 By the blast of God they perish,  
And by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed.
- 10 The roaring of the lion and the voice of the fierce lion  
[are silenced],  
And the teeth of the young lions are broken out.
- 11 The old lion perishes for want of prey,  
And the whelps of the lioness are scattered abroad.
- 12 Unto me an oracle was secretly imparted,  
And mine ear caught a gentle whisper of it.
- 13 In distracted thoughts among the visions of the night,  
When profound sleep falleth upon men,
- 14 Fear came upon me, and trembling,  
Which made all my bones to quake.
- 15 Then a spirit glided along before my face,  
The hair of my flesh stood on end:
- 16 It stood—but its form I could not discern;  
A spectre was before mine eyes;  
There was silence, and I heard a voice—
- 17 Shall feeble man be more just than God?  
Shall man be more pure than his Maker?
- 18 Behold, in his servants he putteth no confidence,  
And his angels he chargeth with frailty;
- 19 How much more true is this of those who dwell in houses  
of clay,  
Whose foundation is in the dust!  
They are crushed before the moth-worm!
- 20 Between morning and evening they are destroyed;  
Without any one regarding it they perish forever.
- 21 Is not the excellency that is in them torn away?  
They die before they have become wise.

## CHAP. V.

- 1 Call now! Is there any one who will respond to thee?  
And to which of the holy ones wilt thou look?
- 2 Truly wrath destroyeth the fool;  
And indignation kills the man easily seduced [to sin].
- 3 I have seen the fool taking root;  
But soon I pronounced his habitation accursed.
- 4 His children are far from safety;  
They are crushed in the gate, and there is no deliverer.
- 5 His harvest the hungry man devours,  
And even to the thorns he seizes it,  
And the thirsty swallow up their wealth.
- 6 For though affliction cometh not from the dust,  
And trouble does not sprout up from the ground;
- 7 For though man is born unto trouble  
As the sparks elevate their flight;
- 8 Nevertheless I would seek unto God,  
And to God would I commit my cause,
- 9 Who doeth great things and unsearchable,  
Marvellous things without number;
- 10 Who giveth rain upon the face of the [cultivated] earth,  
And sendeth waters upon the out-places;
11. Who advances the lowly to high places,  
And the dejected are elevated to prosperity;
- 12 Who disappointeth the purposes of the crafty,  
And their hands cannot accomplish their design;
- 13 Who taketh the wise in their own craftiness,  
And precipitateth the counsels of intriguers.
- 14 They meet with darkness in the day-time,  
And grope at noon as if it were night.
- 15 And he saveth from the sword, from their mouth,  
And from the hand of the mighty, the poor.
- 16 So the poor hath hope,  
And iniquity stoppeth her mouth.
- 17 Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth,  
And the chastening of the Almighty do not despise.
- 18 For he bruiseeth, and he bindeth up;  
He woundeth, and his hands heal.

- 19 In six troubles he will deliver thee,  
Yea, in seven evil shall not touch thee.
- 20 In famine he will redeem thee from death,  
And in war from the power of the sword.
- 21 From the scourge of the tongue shalt thou be hid,  
Nor be afraid of devastation when it cometh.
- 22 At devastation and at famine thou shalt laugh,  
Nor shalt thou dread the wild beasts of the land.
- 23 For thou shalt form an alliance with the stones of the field,  
And the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.
- 24 Thou shalt know that thy tent is secure,  
And thou shalt return to thy dwelling, and not miss it.
- 25 And thou shalt know that thy posterity shall be numerous.  
And thine offspring like plants upon the earth.
- 26 Thou shalt come in full age to the grave,  
As a shock of grain that is gathered in its season.
- 27 Lo! This we have searched out. So it is;  
Hear! and know thou it for thyself.

## CHAPTERS VI. VII.

*The first series in the controversy continued.*

## THE REPLY OF JOB TO ELIPHAZ.

- 1 And Job answered, and said:
- 2 O that my grief were weighed thoroughly!  
That they would put my calamities in the balance together!
- 3 For now would they be heavier than the sands of the sea!  
Therefore are my words swallowed up.
- 4 For the arrows of the Almighty are within me,  
Their poison drinketh up my spirit:  
The terrors of God set themselves in array against me.
- 5 Doth the wild ass bray in the midst of grass?  
Or loweth the ox over his fodder?
- 6 Can that which is insipid be eaten without salt?  
Is there any taste in the white of an egg?
- 7 The things which my soul abhors to touch  
Are become my sorrowful food.

- 8 O that I might have my request,  
And that God would grant my desire,  
9 That it would please God to crush me,  
That he would let loose his hand and cut me off!  
10 Then there would be yet comfort to me;  
Yea, I would exult in my anguish—  
Let him spare not—  
For I have not concealed the words of the Holy One.  
11 What is my strength, that I should hope?  
And what is my end, that I should be patient?  
12 Is my strength the strength of stones?  
Is my flesh brass?  
13 Alas, my help is not in myself!  
Deliverance has fled from me.  
14 To the afflicted kindness should be shown by his friend;  
But he has forsaken the fear of the Almighty.  
15 My brethren are faithless as a brook,  
Like the streams of the valley that pass away;  
16 Which are turbid by means of the [melted] ice,  
In which the snow is hid [by being dissolved].  
17 In the time when they become warm, they evaporate,  
When the heat cometh they are dried up from their place.  
18 The channels of their way wind round about;  
They go into nothing—and are lost.  
19 The caravans of Tema look;  
The travelling companies of Sheba expect to see them.  
20 They are ashamed that they have relied on them;  
They come even to the place, and are confounded.  
21 For now ye also are nothing:  
Ye see my calamity, and shrink back.  
22 Have I said, Bring me a gift?  
Or, from your property make me a present?  
23 Or, deliver me from the hand of an enemy?  
Or, from the hand of the violent rescue me?  
24 Teach me, and I will be silent;  
And wherein I have erred cause me to understand.  
25 How powerful are words of truth!  
But what doth your reproaching demonstrate?  
26 Do you think to reprove mere words?



The words of a man in despair [should be regarded] as the wind.

- 27 Truly against the fatherless ye would spring [a net],  
And ye dig a pitfall for your neighbor.
- 28 Now, therefore, if you please, look closely upon me,  
For if I speak falsehood it will be manifest to you.
- 29 Return now, let it not be assumed to be evil;  
Return again, for my vindication is in it [in my argument].
- 30 Is there iniquity in my tongue?  
Cannot my taste discern that which is simple?

## CHAP. VII.

- 1 Is there not an appointed service to man upon earth?  
Are not his days as the days of an hireling?
- 2 As the servant pants for the evening shadow,  
And as the hireling anxiously expects his wages,
- 3 Thus am I made to inherit comfortless months,  
And nights of anguish are appointed to me.
- 4 If I lie down, then I say,  
When shall I arise, and the night flee away?  
And I am full of restlessness until the dawn.
- 5 My flesh is clothed with worms, and clods of dust;  
My skin becomes rigid, and is loathsome.
- 6 My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle;  
They are consumed without hope.
- 7 O remember that my life is wind;  
Mine eye shall not return to see good!
- 8 The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more;  
Thine eyes are upon me—and I am not!
- 9 A cloud wasteth and vanisheth away—  
So he that goes down to the grave cometh up again no more.
- 10 He shall not return again to his house,  
And his dwelling-place shall know him no more.
- 11 Therefore I will not refrain my mouth;  
I will speak in the anguish of my spirit,  
I will cry out in the bitterness of my soul.
- 12 Am I a sea, or a sea monster,  
That thou settest a watch over me?

- 13 When I say my couch shall console me,  
My bed shall lighten my complaint,
- 14 Then dost thou scare me with dreams,  
And with visions dost thou terrify me;
- 15 So that my soul chooseth strangling—  
Death—rather than these bones.
- 16 I loathe [life]; I would not live always;  
Let me alone, for my days are vanity.
- 17 What is man that thou shouldst make him of so great im-  
portance,  
And that thou shouldst set thy heart towards him?
- 18 That thou shouldst visit him every morning,  
And prove him every moment?
- 19 How long ere thou wilt look away from me,  
And let me alone that I may swallow down my spittle?
- 20 Have I sinned; what have I done to thee?  
O thou Watcher of man!  
Why dost thou set me up before thyself for a mark,  
So that I am a burden to myself?
- 21 And why dost thou not pardon my transgression,  
And suffer my guilt to pass away?  
For soon shall I sleep in the dust:  
In the morning thou shalt seek me, and I shall not be.

## CHAPTER VIII

*The first series in the controversy continued.*

### THE FIRST SPEECH OF BILDAÐ THE SHUHITE.

- 1 Then answered Bildað the Shuhite, and said:
- 2 How long wilt thou speak these things?  
And the words of thy mouth be a mighty wind?
- 3 Doth God pervert judgment?  
Or will the Almighty pervert justice?
- 4 Since thy children have sinned against him,  
And he hath cast them away on account of their transgression;
- 5 Yet if thou wouldst seek early unto God,

- And make thy supplication to the Almighty,  
6 If thou wert pure and upright,  
Even now would he arouse himself for thee,  
And would make prosperous thy righteous habitation.  
7 Although thy beginning should be small,  
Yet thy latter end would greatly increase.  
8 For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age,  
Yea, apply thyself to the examination of their forefathers;  
9 (For we are but of yesterday, and we know nothing,  
For our days upon earth are a shadow;)  
10 Shall they not teach thee, and tell thee,  
And utter words from their hearts?  
11 "Can the paper reed grow up without mire?  
"Can the bulrush grow up without water?  
12 "Even yet in its greenness, and uncut,  
"It withereth before any other herb.  
13 "Such are the ways of all who forget God;  
"So perishes the hope of the hypocrite.  
14 "His hope shall rot,  
"And his trust shall be the building of the spider.  
15 "He shall lean upon his building and it shall not stand;  
"He shall grasp it, but it shall not endure.  
16 "He is green before the sun rises,  
"And his branches go forth over his garden.  
17 "Over the heap [of stones] his roots are entwined,  
"They look to the pile of stones [for a support].  
18 "Yet the sun shall absorb it from its place,  
"And shall refuse to own it, saying, 'I never saw thee.'  
19 "Lo! such is the joy of his course!  
"Yet from the dust others shall spring up."  
20 Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man;  
Nor will he lend his aid to the wicked.  
21 While he filleth thy mouth with laughter,  
And thy lips with triumph.  
22 They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame,  
And the tent of the wicked shall not be!

## CHAPTER IX.

*The first series in the controversy continued.*

THE REPLY OF JOB TO BILDAF. Ch. ix. x.

- 1 Then Job answered, and said:
- 2 Truly I know that it is so;  
And how can man be just before God?
- 3 If he chooses to enter into a litigation with him,\*  
He cannot answer him to one [charge] of a thousand.
- 4 Wise in heart! and mighty in strength!  
Who hath hardened himself in opposition to him and been  
successful?
- 5 He removeth the mountains, and they know it not;  
He overturneth them in his wrath.
- 6 He shaketh the earth out of her place;  
And the pillars thereof tremble.
- 7 He commandeth the sun, and it riseth not;  
And he sealeth up the stars.
- 8 He alone stretches out the heavens;  
And walketh upon the high waves of the sea.
- 9 He maketh Arcturus, Orion,  
The Pleiades, and the secret chambers of the South.
- 10 He doeth great things which there is no searching out.  
Yea, marvellous things beyond number.
- 11 Lo! He passeth by me—and I see him not;  
He goeth on—but I do not perceive him,
- 12 Lo! He taketh away, and who can compel him to restore?  
Who can say to him, What doest thou?
- 13 God will not turn away his anger;  
The supporters of pride bow before him.
- 14 Truly if I should answer him,  
I would carefully select my words before him;
- 15 Whom, though I were innocent, I would not answer;  
I would cast myself on the mercy of my Judge.
- 16 Should I call, and he should respond,  
I would not believe that he could hear my voice—

- 17 He who is overwhelming me with a tempest,  
And who multiplies my wounds without cause—
- 18 He that will not suffer me to take my breath,  
But who fills me with bitterness.
- 19 If the contest had respect to strength, lo! how strong is He!  
If it relates to justice, who would summon for me the witnesses for trial?
- 20 Should I justify myself, my own mouth would condemn me.  
I perfect! It would prove me perverse.
- 21 I perfect! I should not know my own soul!  
I should disown my very being!
- 22 There is but one result; therefore I maintained it—  
The perfect and the wicked he destroyeth alike.
- 23 If the scourge slayeth suddenly  
He laugheth at the sufferings of the innocent.
- 24 The earth is given into the hands of the wicked;  
The face of its judges he covereth;  
If this be not so, where—who is he?
- 25 And my days are swifter than a runner;  
They flee away, and they see no good.
- 26 They pass on like the reed-skiffs;  
As the eagle darting upon his prey.
- 27 If I say I will forget my complaining,  
I will change my sad countenance and brighten up,
- 28 Still I am in dread of all my sorrows,  
I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.
- 29 I am held to be guilty;  
Why then should I labour in vain?
- 30 Should I wash myself in snow-water,  
And cleanse my hands in soap,
- 31 Still thou wilt plunge me into the mire,  
So that my own clothes will abhor me.
- 32 For he is not a man as I am that I should contend with him,  
And that we should come together to trial.
- 33 Neither is there between us any umpire  
Who may lay his hand upon both.
- 34 Let him remove from me his rod,  
And let not his terror dismay me,

- 35 And I will speak and not be afraid of him—  
But not thus can I as I am now.

## CHAP. X.

- 1 My soul is weary of my life,  
I will give myself up to complaint,  
I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.
- 2 I will say unto God,  
Do not merely hold me to be wicked,  
Show me the reason why thou dost contend with me.
- 3 Is it a pleasure for thee to oppress?  
To despise the work of thy hands,  
And to shine upon the counsel of the wicked?
- 4 Are thine eyes of flesh?  
Dost thou see as man seeth?
- 5 Are thy days as the days of man?  
And thy years as the years of man?
- 6 That thou seekest after my iniquity,  
And searchest after my sin,
- 7 With thy knowledge that I am not a wicked man,  
And that none can deliver out of thy hand?
- 8 Thy hands have laboriously formed me,  
And have made me compact on every part,  
And wilt thou destroy me?
- 9 Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as clay;  
And wilt thou bring me again to dust?
- 10 Thou didst pour me out as milk,  
And curdle me as cheese.
- 11 With skin and flesh hast thou clothed me,  
With bones and sinews hast thou strengthened me.
- 12 Life and favor thou hast granted me,  
And thy care hath preserved my spirit.
- 13 And these things thou didst hide in thine heart;  
I know that this was thy purpose.
- 14 If I sin, thou dost carefully observe me;  
And from my iniquity thou wilt not acquit me.
- 15 If I am wicked, wo is unto me;

- And if I am righteous, I cannot lift up my head.  
 I am full of confusion:—  
 And see my affliction,  
 16 For it magnifies itself.  
 Like a lion thou dost hunt me,  
 And thou returnest, and thy dealings towards me are marvellous!
- 17 Thou makest new thy proofs against me,  
 And increasest thine anger against me:—  
 The whole army of afflictions is upon me.
- 18 And why didst thou bring me forth from the womb?  
 O that I had expired, and that no eye had seen me!
- 19 I should have been as though I had not been;  
 I should have been borne from the womb to the grave.
- 20 Are not my days few?  
 O spare me, and let me alone, that I may take a little ease,
- 21 Before I go whence I shall not return,  
 To the land of darkness and the shadow of death—
- 22 The land of darkness like the blackness of the shadow of death;  
 Where there is no order, and where its shining is like blackness.

## CHAPTER XI.

*The first series in the controversy continued.*

THE FIRST SPEECH OF ZOPHAR. Ch. xi.

- 1 And Zophar the Naamathite answered and said:  
 2 Shall not the multitude of words be answered?  
 Shall the man of mere talk be justified?  
 3 Shall thy trifles make men be silent?  
 Shalt thou mock, and no one put thee to shame?  
 4 For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure,  
 And I am clean in thine eyes.  
 5 But O that God would speak,  
 And open his lips with thee;  
 6 And would declare to thee the secrets of wisdom,

For they are double what we can understand!  
Then shouldst thou know that God had left unnoticed a part  
of thine iniquities.

- 7 Canst thou by searching find out God?  
Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?
- 8 The heights of heaven! What canst thou do?  
The depths below Sheol! What canst thou know?
- 9 Longer than the earth is its measure;  
And broader than the ocean.
- 10 If he arrest, and imprison, and bring to trial,  
Who then can prevent him?
- 11 For he knoweth men of falsehood,  
And he seeth iniquity, though he does not seem to notice it.
- 12 For deceitful man would seem to have a heart,  
Though man be born like the colt of a wild ass.
- 13 If thou prepare thine heart,  
And stretch out thine hands towards him;
- 14 If the iniquity which is in thine hands thou wilt put far away,  
And wilt not suffer evil to dwell in thy habitation;
- 15 Then shalt thou lift up thy countenance without spot,  
And thou shalt be firm, and shalt not fear.
- 16 For thou shalt forget thy misery;  
Like waters that pass away shalt thou remember it.
- 17 And thy life shall be bright above the noon-day:  
Now thou art in darkness—but thou shalt be as the morning.
- 18 And thou shalt be confident, for there will be hope:  
Now thou art suffused with shame—but thou shalt lie down  
in safety.
- 19 Yea, thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid;  
And many shall make suit unto thee.
- 20 But the eyes of the wicked shall be wearied out;  
And they shall find no refuge;  
And their hope shall expire.



## CHAPTERS XII., XIII., XIV.

*The first series in the controversy continued.*

## THE ANSWER OF JOB TO ZOPHAR.

## CHAP. XII.

- 1 And Job answered and said:
- 2 No doubt ye are the people!  
And wisdom will die with you;
- 3 Yet I have understanding as well as you;  
I am not inferior to you;  
And with whom are there not sayings like these?
- 4 A mockery to his neighbor am I—  
The man calling upon God, and whom he answers—  
Derided is the just, the perfect man.
- 5 He that is ready to slip with his feet,  
In the eyes of him that is at ease,  
Is as a cast-away torch.
- 6 The tents of robbers are secure,  
They are secure to those who provoke God,  
To whose hand God brings in abundance.
- 7 But now ask the beasts, and they shall teach thee;  
And the fowls of heaven, and they shall tell thee.
- 8 Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee.  
And the fishes of the sea will declare to thee.
- 9 Who among all these doth not know  
That the hand of JEHOVAH doeth this?
- 10 In whose hand is the life of every thing that liveth,  
And the breath of all human flesh.
- 11 Doth not the ear prove words?  
And the palate taste its food?
- 12 With the aged is wisdom,  
And in length of days is understanding.
- 13 With Him are wisdom and strength;  
To him pertains counsel and understanding.
- 14 Lo! he pulleth down, and it cannot be rebuilt;  
He shutteth up a man, and there is no opening [for escape].

- 15 Lo! he restraineth the waters, and they are dried up;  
He sendeth them forth, and they desolate the earth.
- 16 With him are strength and sufficiency;  
The deceived and the deceiver are his.
- 17 He leadeth counsellors away captive,  
And judges he maketh fools.
- 18 The authority of kings he loosens,  
And with a cord he bindeth their loins.
- 19 He leadeth priests away captive,  
And the mighty he prostrates.
- 20 He removeth eloquence from the trusty,  
And taketh away discernment from the aged.
- 21 He poureth contempt upon princes;  
And looseth the girdle of the mighty.
- 22 He revealeth deep things from the midst of darkness;  
And bringeth the shadow of death to light.
- 23 He increaseth nations, and destroyeth them;  
He enlargeth nations, and leadeth them back.
- 24 He taketh away understanding from the chiefs of the people  
of the earth;  
And causeth them to wander in a solitude where there is no  
path.
- 25 They grope in darkness, and there is no light;  
He maketh them to reel like a drunken man.

## CHAP. XIII.

- 1 Lo! all this hath mine eye seen;  
Mine ear hath heard and understood it.
- 2 What ye know, I know also;  
I do not fall below you.
- 3 But O that I might speak to the Almighty;  
And I would have pleasure in urging my cause before God.
- 4 For truly ye are forgers of sophisms;  
Physicians of no value all of you!
- 5 O that ye would be entirely silent,  
And it would be your wisdom!
- 6 Hear, I pray you, my reasoning;  
And attend to the arguments of my lips.

- 7 Will ye speak falsely for God?  
For him will ye utter fallacy?
- 8 Will ye be partial to his person?  
Will ye contend for God?
- 9 Would it be well for you if he should thoroughly search you?  
Can you deceive him as man may be deceived?
- 10 Surely he will rebuke you,  
If you secretly have respect to persons.
- 11 Shall not his majesty fill you with reverence?  
And his dread fall upon you?
- 12 Your maxims are parables of ashes;  
Your ramparts are ramparts of clay.
- 13 Hold your peace, and let me speak—  
And then let anything come upon me.
- 14 In regard to this, I will take my flesh in my teeth,  
And my life in my hand.
- 15 Lo! Let him slay me; I will trust in him.  
I will vindicate my ways before him,
- 16 He also shall be to me for salvation;  
For an hypocrite shall not come before him.
- 17 Attentively hear my words,  
And my declaration with your ears.
- 18 Lo! now I have set in order my cause;  
I know that I shall be declared just.
- 19 Who is there that will contend with me?  
For then would I be silent—and die.
- 20 Only do not two things unto me—  
Then will I not hide myself from thy presence.
- 21 Remove thy hand far from me,  
And let not thy dread make me afraid!
- 22 Then call, and I will answer;  
Or I will speak, and answer thou me.
- 23 How many are my iniquities and my sins?  
Make me to know my transgression and my sins.
- 24 Why dost thou hide thy face,  
And regard me as thine enemy?
- 25 Wilt thou break the driven leaf?  
Wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?
- 26 For thou writest bitter things against me,

- And makest me to inherit the sins of my youth.  
 27 Thou placest my feet in the stocks,  
 And thou watchest all my paths:  
 Upon the soles of my feet thou dost set a print.  
 28 Thus man like rottenness decays,  
 Like a garment that the moth consumes.

## CHAP. XIV.

- 1 Man, the offspring of woman,  
 Is of few days, and is full of trouble.  
 2 He cometh forth as a flower, and is cut down;  
 And he fleeth as a shadow, and doth not stay.  
 3 And dost thou indeed open thine eyes upon such an one,  
 And bring me to trial with thee?  
 4 Who can produce a clean thing from an unclean?  
 Not one.  
 5 Since his days are fixed,  
 The number of his months is with thee,  
 Thou hast affixed his limits which he cannot pass,  
 6 O turn from him, and leave him,  
 That he may enjoy his day as [that of] a hireling.  
 7 For there is hope of a tree,  
 If it be cut down, that it will flourish again,  
 And that its tender branch will not fail.  
 8 Though its root grow old in the earth,  
 And its trunk die on the ground,  
 9 From the vapor of water it will spring up again,  
 And put forth boughs as a young plant.  
 10 But man dieth, and he is gone—  
 Yea, man expires—and where is he?  
 11 The waters from the lake fail,  
 And the river is exhausted and dried up,  
 12 So man lieth down, and riseth not;  
 Till the heavens be no more, they shall not be aroused,  
 And they shall not be awaked out of their sleep.  
 13 O that thou wouldst hide me in Sheol!  
 That thou wouldst conceal me till thine anger be past!  
 That thou wouldst appoint for me a set time and then remem-  
 ber me!

- 14 If a man die, shall he live again?  
All the days of my hard service will I wait  
Till my change come.
- 15 Do thou call, and I will answer thee;  
Show thou compassion to the work of thine hands.
- 16 For now thou dost number my steps;  
Dost thou not watch over my sins?
- 17 My transgression is sealed up in a bag,  
And thou sewest up mine iniquity.
- 18 And surely the mountain falling comes to nought,  
And the rock is removed from its place;
- 19 The waters wear away the stones,  
The floods wash away the dust of the earth,  
And the hope of man thou dost destroy.
- 20 Thou dost overpower him for ever, and he passes off;  
Thou dost change his countenance, and sendest him away
- 21 His sons are honored, but he knoweth it not;  
Or they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not.
- 22 But his flesh shall have pain upon him;  
And his soul within him shall mourn.

## CHAPTER XV.

*The second series in the controversy.* Ch. xv.—xxl.

THE SECOND SPEECH OF ELIPHAZ. Ch. xv.

- 1 And Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:  
2 Should a wise man answer with arguments of wind,  
And fill himself with the east wind?  
3 Should he reason with words which do not profit,  
And in discourses in which there is no benefit?  
4 Truly thou dost make religion void;  
And dost make prayer useless before God.  
5 Yea, thine own mouth proclaimeth thine iniquity,  
And thou hast chosen the tongue of the crafty.  
6 Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I,  
And thy lips testify against thee.  
7 Art thou the first man that was born?

- And wast thou brought forth before the hills?  
 8 In the council of God hast thou listened?  
 And hast thou reserved all wisdom to thyself?  
 9 What dost thou know that we know not also?  
 What dost thou understand that is not with us?  
 10 For the old and the hoary-headed are with us—  
 More venerable in age than thy father.  
 11 Wilt thou disregard the consolations which God furnishes,  
 And the words which have been so very gently addressed to  
 thee?  
 12 Why does thy heart bear thee away?  
 And why do thine eyes evince so much pride?  
 13 For against God hath thy spirit replied,  
 And thou hast brought forth [hard] speeches from thy mouth.  
 14 What is man that he should be pure?  
 And he that is born of a woman that he should be just?  
 15 Behold he does not confide in his Holy Ones,  
 And the heavens are not pure in his eyes.  
 16 How much more abominable and polluted is man  
 Who drinketh iniquity as water!  
 17 I will show thee; hear me;  
 That which I have seen I will declare,  
 18 Which wise men have related,  
 And which [having received it] of their ancestors they have  
 not concealed,  
 19 When the land was entirely in their possession,  
 And a foreigner had not passed among them:  
 20 "All his days the wicked man is tormented with pain;  
 "And the number of his years is unknown to the oppressor.  
 21 "A fearful sound is in his ears—  
 "And in his security the destroyer cometh upon him.  
 22 "He has not confidence that he shall return from darkness;  
 "And his expectation is the sword.  
 23 "He wandereth abroad for bread—where is it?  
 "He knows that a day of darkness is at hand.  
 24 "Trouble and anguish fill him with dread,  
 "They prevail against him—as a king prepared for the battle.  
 25 "For he stretches out his hand against God;  
 "And against the Almighty he fortifies himself.

- 26 " He runneth upon him with outstretched neck.  
 " With the thick bosses of his shields,  
 27 " Because he covered his face with fatness,  
 " And gathered flesh upon his loins;  
 28 " Therefore shall he dwell in desolate cities,  
 " In houses which are not inhabited,  
 " Which are ready to become a pile of ruins,  
 29 " He shall not be rich;  
 " His property shall not remain;  
 " His possessions shall not be spread abroad upon the earth.  
 30 " He shall not escape out of darkness;  
 " His branches shall the flame dry up;  
 " By the breath of his mouth shall he be taken away.  
 31 " Let him not trust in vanity. He is deceived.  
 " Vanity shall be his recompence.  
 32 " He shall not complete his time;  
 " And his branches shall not be green.  
 33 " He shall cast his unripe fruit as the vine,  
 " And shed his blossoms like the olive.  
 34 " For the community of hypocrites shall be desolate;  
 " And fire shall consume the tents of bribery.  
 35 " They conceive mischief;  
 " They bring forth vanity;  
 " And their breast deviseth deceit."

## CHAPTERS XVI., XVII.

### THE ANSWER OF JOB.

#### CHAP. XVI.

- 1 But Job answered and said:  
 2 Many such things as these have I heard!  
 Miserable comforters are ye all!  
 3 Will there be an end to words of wind?  
 Or what has provoked thee to answer thus?  
 4 I also could speak as ye do;  
 If ye were now in my place,  
 I could string together words against you,  
 And could shake my head at you.  
 5 But I would strengthen you with my mouth,

- And the moving of my lips should sustain you.
- 6 If I speak, my grief is not stayed;  
If I forbear, how does it depart from me?
- 7 For now He hath quite exhausted me;  
Thou hast made desolate all my house.
- 8 For thou hast compressed me, and this is a witness against me;  
And my leanness rises up against me, and accuses me to my face.
- 9 In his anger he teareth me, and is become my adversary;  
He gnashes upon me with his teeth;  
Mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me.
- 10 They gape upon me with their mouth;  
In scorn they smite my cheek;  
They have conspired together against me.
- 11 God hath made me a captive to the unrighteous;  
And into the hands of the wicked hath he delivered me.
- 12 Happy was I—but he crushed me;  
He seized me by the neck, and shook me;  
He set me up for a mark.
- 13 His archers came around me;  
He transfixed my reins, and did not spare;  
My gall hath he poured out upon the ground.
- 14 He breaketh me with breach upon breach;  
He rusheth upon me like a mighty man.
- 15 I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin;  
And degraded my horn in the dust.
- 16 My face is swollen with grief;  
And on my eyelids is the shadow of death.
- 17 Not because there has been injustice in my hands;  
And my prayer hath been pure.
- 18 O earth, cover not my blood,  
Let there be no hiding-place for my cry.
- 19 Also now behold my evidence is in heaven;  
My witness is on high.
- 20 My friends are but mockers;  
Mine eye looketh with tears unto God.
- 21 O that a man might be permitted to contend with God,  
As the offspring of man does with his neighbor.
- 22 For the numbered years pass away,  
And I am going the way whence I shall not return.



## CHAP. XVII.

- 1 My spirit is exhausted;  
My days are at an end;  
The grave waits for me.
- 2 Are there not mockers with me?  
And doth not mine eye rest upon their provocations?
- 3 Lay down now [O God a pledge],  
Give security for me [in the controversy] with thee;  
Who is he that will strike hands with me?
- 4 Behold, thou hast hid their heart from understanding;  
Therefore thou shalt not exalt them.
- 5 He who discloses his friends to the prey,  
The eyes of his children shall fail.
- 6 Me he has placed for a by-word among the people;  
I am an object of scorn before their face.
- 7 Mine eye is dim with sorrow,  
And all my limbs are like a shadow.
- 8 The upright shall be amazed at this;  
And the innocent will rouse himself against the wicked.
- 9 The righteous will hold on his way,  
And he that hath clean hands will become stronger and stronger
- 10 As for you all, return, and come, I pray,  
And I shall not find among you one wise man.
- 11 My days are passed;  
My plans are at an end—  
The cherished purposes of my heart.
- 12 Night has become day to me;  
The light bordereth on darkness.
- 13 Truly I look to Sheol as my home;  
My bed I spread in the place of darkness.
- 14 To corruption I say, "Thou art my father;"  
To the worm, "My mother, and my sister."
- 15 And where now is my hope?  
And who will see my hope fulfilled?
- 16 To the bars of Sheol they must descend,  
Yea, we shall descend together to the dust.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

*The second series of the controversy continued.*

## THE REPLY OF BILDAD TO JOB.

- 1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:
- 2 How long will it be ere you make an end of words?<sup>a</sup>  
Use sound arguments, and then we will speak.
- 3 Why are we regarded as brutes,  
And reputed vile in your sight?
- 4 O Thou that tearest thyself in thine anger!  
Must the earth be deserted for thee,  
And the rock removed from its place?
- 5 Behold, the light of the wicked shall be put out;  
The flame of his fire shall not shine.
- 6 Light shall turn to darkness in his tent,  
And his lamp over him shall be extinguished.
- 7 His strong steps shall be straitened,  
And his own plans shall cast him down.
- 8 For he is brought into the net by his own feet,  
And into the pitfall he walks.
- 9 The snare takes him by the heel,  
And the gin takes fast hold of him.
- 10 A net is secretly laid for him in the ground,  
And a trap for him in the pathway.
- 11 Terrors alarm him on every side,  
And harass him at his heels.
- 12 His strength shall be exhausted by hunger,  
And destruction shall seize upon his side.
- 13 It shall devour the vigor of his frame,  
The first-born of death shall devour his limbs.
- 14 His hope shall be rooted out of his tent,  
And he shall be brought to the King of Terrors.
- 15 [Terror] shall dwell in his tent—for it is no longer his;  
Sulphur shall be scattered upon his habitation.
- 16 His roots below, are dried up;  
Above, his branches are withered.

- 17 His memory shall perish from the earth,  
And no name shall he have in public places.
- 18 He shall be driven from light into darkness,  
And they shall drive him out of the world.
- 19 He shall have no son or kinsman among the people,  
And there shall be no survivor in his dwelling-place.
- 20 The dwellers in the East shall be astonished at his day;  
They in the West shall be struck with horror.
- 21 Such are the dwellings of the impious man,  
And this the place of him that knows not God.

## CHAPTER XIX.

*The second series in the controversy continued.*

## THE REPLY OF JOB TO BILDAD.

- 1 Then Job answered and said:
- 2 How long will ye vex my soul,  
And crush me with words?
- 3 These ten times have ye reviled me,  
You are not ashamed to stun me [with reproaches].
- 4 And be it, indeed, that I have erred;  
My error remaineth with myself.
- 5 Since ye do indeed magnify yourselves against me,  
And urge vehemently against me this which is [the ground  
of] my reproach,
- 6 Know now that it is God who has overthrown me;  
He hath encircled me with his net.
- 7 Lo, I complain of violence, but I receive no answer;  
I cry aloud, but there is no justice.
- 8 My way he hath hedged up so that I cannot pass,  
And in my paths he hath placed darkness.
- 9 He hath stripped me of my glory,  
And taken the crown from my head.
- 10 He destroys me on every side—and I am gone;  
He uprooteth my hope as a tree.
- 11 His anger burneth against me,  
And he regardeth me as an enemy.

- 12 His troops advance together against me,  
They throw up their way against me,  
And they encamp round about my dwelling.
- 13 My brethren he hath put far from me,  
And my acquaintances are wholly estranged from me.
- 14 My neighbors have failed,  
And my intimate friends have forgotten me.
- 15 The foreigners in my house,  
Yea, my own maid-servants, regard me as a stranger—  
I am an alien in their view.
- 16 I call my servant—and he gives me no answer;  
With my own mouth do I entreat him.
- 17 My breath is offensive to my wife—  
Though I entreated her by [our love for] my own children.
- 18 Yea, young children despised me;  
I arose, and they spake against me.
- 19 All my intimate friends abhorred me,  
And they whom I loved turned against me.
- 20 My bone cleaves to my skin and my flesh,  
And I have scarcely escaped with the skin of my teeth.
- 21 Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O my friends,  
For the hand of God hath smitten me!
- 22 Why do ye persecute me as God does,  
And are not satisfied with my flesh?
- 23 O that my words were now written!  
O that they were engraved on a tablet!
- 24 That with an iron graver, and with lead,  
They were engraven upon a rock for ever!
- 25 For I know that my Avenger liveth,  
And that hereafter he shall stand up upon the earth;
- 26 And though after my skin this [flesh] be destroyed,  
Yet even without my flesh shall I see God;
- 27 Whom I shall see for myself,  
And mine eyes shall behold, and not another—  
Though my vitals are wasting away within me.
- 28 Therefore you should say, "Why do we persecute him?"  
"Yea, the substance of piety is found in him."
- 29 Be ye afraid of the sword;

For malice is a crime for the sword—  
That ye may know that there is justice.

## CHAPTER XX.

*The second series in the controversy continued.*

## THE REPLY OF ZOPHAR TO JOB.

- 1 Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said:
- 2 My distracted thoughts urge me to reply;  
[I reply] from the impetuosity of my feelings.
- 3 I have heard thy injurious rebuke,  
And the emotions of my mind cause me to answer.
- 4 Knowest thou not that from the most ancient times,  
From the time when man was placed upon the earth,
- 5 That the triumphing of the wicked is short,  
And the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment?
- 6 Though his greatness mount up to the heavens,  
And his excellency unto the clouds,
- 7 Yet he shall perish for ever as the vilest substance,  
They who have seen him shall say, Where is he?
- 8 He shall flee away as a dream, and not be found;  
Yea, he shall vanish as a vision of the night.
- 9 The eye also which saw him shall see him no more,  
And his place shall never more behold him.
- 10 His sons shall seek the aid of the poor,  
And their hands shall give back his wealth.
- 11 His bones are full of his secret sins,  
And they shall lie down with him in the dust.
- 12 Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth,  
Though he hide it under his tongue,
- 13 Though he retain it and will not part with it,  
And keep it long in his mouth,
- 14 His food shall be changed within him;  
It shall become the poison of asps within him.
- 15 He hath glutted himself with riches,  
And he shall vomit them up again:  
God shall expel them from him.

- 16 He shall suck the poison of asps;  
The viper's tongue shall destroy him.
- 17 He shall never look upon the rivulets—  
The streams of the valleys—of honey and butter.
- 18 The fruits of his labor shall he give back, and shall not enjoy them.  
As property to be restored shall it be, and he shall not rejoice in it.
- 19 Because he hath oppressed, and then abandoned the poor,  
And seized upon the house which he did not build,
- 20 Surely he shall not know internal peace,  
He shall not save that in which he delights.
- 21 Nothing of his food shall remain;  
Wherefore, his prosperity shall not endure.
- 22 In the fulness of his abundance he shall be in want;  
The whole power of wretchedness shall come upon him.
- 23 Enough indeed shall there be to fill himself—  
God shall send upon him the fury of his anger,  
And rain it down upon him while he is eating.
- 24 He shall flee from the iron weapon,  
But the bow of brass shall pierce him through.
- 25 One draws out [the arrow], and it cometh through his body;  
The glittering steel cometh out of his gall—  
Terrors are upon him!
- 26 Every kind of calamity is treasured up for him;  
A fire not kindled shall consume him;  
That shall fare ill which is left in his tent.
- 27 The heavens shall reveal his iniquity;  
And the earth shall rise up against him.
- 28 The property of his house shall disappear—  
Flowing away in the day of the wrath of God.
- 29 This is the portion of the wicked man from God;  
And the inheritance appointed for him by the Almighty.

## CHAPTER XXI.

*The second series in the controversy concluded.*

## THE ANSWER OF JOB.

- 1 But Job answered and said:
- 2 Hear attentively my speech;  
And let this be your consolation.
- 3 Bear with me, and I will speak;  
And after I have spoken, mock on!
- 4 As for me, is my argument before man?  
And if this be so, why should not my spirit be in anguish?
- 5 Look on me, and be astonished!  
And lay your hand on your mouth!
- 6 When I think on it, I am confounded;  
And trembling seizes on my flesh.
- 7 Why is it that the wicked live,  
Grow old, yea, are mighty in wealth?
- 8 Their children are established before them, and with them,  
And their posterity before their eyes.
- 9 Their houses are safe from alarms,  
And the rod of God is not upon them.
- 10 Their cattle conceive and fail not;  
Their heifer calveth, and casteth not her young.
- 11 They send forth their little ones like a flock,  
And their children sportively play.
- 12 They exhilarate themselves with the tabor and harp,  
And rejoice at the sound of the pipe.
- 13 They spend their days in [the enjoyment of] good,  
And in an instant they go down to the grave.
- 14 And they say to God, "Depart from us;  
"We desire not the knowledge of thy ways.
- 15 "Who is the Almighty, that we should serve him,  
"And what will it profit us, if we pray unto him?"
- 16 "Lo, their good" [you say] "is not in their own hand"—  
(Far from me be the defence of the wicked;)
- 17 [But] how often does it occur that the light of the wicked is  
put out,

- And that destruction cometh upon them,  
And that God distributeth to them sorrows in his wrath?
- 18 How often are they as stubble before the wind,  
And as chaff that the storm carrieth away?
- 19 [You say] "God layeth up his iniquity for his children;  
"He rewardeth him, and he shall know it.
- 20 "His eyes shall see his destruction,  
"And he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.
- 21 "For what is his happiness in his family after him,  
"When the number of his own months are cut off in the  
midst?"
- 22 [But I reply] Who shall impart knowledge to God,  
To him who judgeth the highest!
- 23 One dieth in the fulness of his prosperity,  
Being wholly at ease and quiet—
- 24 His watering-places for flocks abound with milk,  
And his bones are moist with marrow;
- 25 And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul,  
And never tasteth pleasure.
- 26 Alike they lie down in the dust,  
And the worm covereth them.
- 27 Lo! I know your thoughts,  
And the devices by which you wrong me.
- 28 For ye say, "Where is the house of the prince?  
"And where the dwelling-place of the wicked?"
- 29 Have ye not inquired of the travellers,  
And will you not admit their testimony
- 30 That the wicked man is kept for the day of destruction,  
And that he shall be brought forth in the day of fierce wrath?
- 31 Who charges him with his way to his face?  
And who recompenses to him that which he has done?
- 32 And he shall be borne [with honor] to the grave;  
And [friends] shall watch tenderly over his tomb.
- 33 Sweet to him shall be the clods of the valley;  
Every man shall go out to honor him,  
And of those before him there shall be no number,
- 34 And why then do you offer me vain consolations—  
Since in your responses there is error?



## CHAPTER XXII.

*The third series in the controversy.* Ch. xxii.—xxxii.

## THE THIRD SPEECH OF ELIPHAZ.

- 1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:
- 2 Can a man, then, be profitable to God,  
As a wise man may be profitable to himself?
- 3 Is it a pleasure to the Almighty if thou be just,  
Or gain to him shouldst thou make thy ways perfect?
- 4 Will he contend with thee because he feareth thee—  
With THEE will he enter into judgment?
- 5 Is not thy wickedness great?  
Is there any end to thy sins?
- 6 For thou hast taken a pledge of thy brother unjustly,  
And stripped off the clothing of the destitute.
- 7 Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink,  
And from the hungry thou hast withholden bread.
- 8 But the man of power had the land;  
The man of rank dwelt in it.
- 9 Thou hast sent widows away empty,  
And the arms of the fatherless thou hast broken.
- 10 Therefore snares are round about thee,  
And sudden fear troubleth thee
- 11 Or darkness, so that thou canst not see,  
And floods of water cover thee.
- 12 Is not God in the height of heaven?  
And behold the stars, how high they are!
- 13 And [hence] thou sayest "How doth God know?  
"And can he judge behind the thick darkness?"
- 14 "Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he cannot see;  
"And he walketh upon the arch of heaven."
- 15 But hast thou marked the ancient way  
Which wicked men have trodden?
- 16 Who were huddled together [by the waters] in a moment,  
And whose foundations the flood swept away?
- 17 Who said unto God, "Depart from us;"  
And [who asked] what the Almighty could do for them?

- 18 And yet he filled their houses with good things!  
Far from me be the counsel of the wicked!
- 19 The righteous see it, and rejoice;  
And the innocent hold them in derision [saying:]
- 20 "Truly our adversary is destroyed!  
"The fire hath consumed their abundance!"
- 21 Acquaint now thyself with him, and thou shalt have peace;  
And thus shall good come unto thee.
- 22 Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth,  
And lay up his words in thine heart.
- 23 If thou return to the Almighty thou shalt be built up.  
If thou put away iniquity from thy tabernacle,
- 24 And cast to the dust thy precious treasure,  
And to the stones of the brooks [again] the gold of Ophir,
- 25 Then shall the Almighty be thy precious treasure,  
And shall be to thee piles of silver.
- 26 For then shalt thou have delight in the Almighty,  
And shalt lift up thy face unto God.
- 27 Thou shalt pray unto him, and he shall hear thee,  
And thou shalt perfect [the object of] thy vows.
- 28 Thou shalt form a purpose and it shall be accomplished,  
And upon thy ways shall the light shine.
- 29 When [other men] are cast down,  
Thou shalt say, "Cheer up!"  
And the dejected thou shalt save.
- 30 Thou shalt deliver even the guilty man—  
He shall be saved by the purity of thy hands.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

*The third series in the controversy continued.*

THE ANSWER OF JOB. Ch. xxiii. xxiv.

- 1 Then Job answered and said:
- 2 Even to-day is my complaint bitter,  
The hand that is upon me is heavier than my groaning.
- 3 O that I knew where I might find him!  
That I might come even to his seat!
- 4 I would order my cause before him,

- And fill my mouth with arguments;  
5 I would know the words which he would answer me,  
And understand what he would say unto me.  
6 Would he contend with me with his mighty power?  
No: he would give me strength.  
7 There the righteous man might argue the case before him;  
And I should be delivered for ever from him who would  
judge me.  
8 But, behold, I go to the East, and he is not there,  
And to the West, but I cannot perceive him;  
9 To the North, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him,  
He hideth himself in the South, but I cannot see him.  
10 But he knoweth my way;  
When he has tried me, I shall come forth as gold.  
11 On his steps my foot hath seized;  
His way I have kept, and have not turned from it.  
12 The commandment of his lips I have not neglected;  
More than every purpose of my own have I regarded the  
words of his mouth.  
13 But he is of one [purpose], and who can turn him?  
And what he desireth, that he doeth.  
14 He performeth the thing that is appointed for me;  
And there are many such purposes in his mind.  
15 Therefore I am troubled before him;  
When I consider, I am afraid of him.  
16 For God maketh my heart faint,  
And the Almighty troubleth me;  
17 Because I was not taken away before darkness came,  
And he hath not hidden the cloud from mine eyes.

## CHAP. XXIV.

- 1 Why, since no events are hidden from the Almighty,  
Do not his friends see his judgments?  
2 They [the wicked] remove the landmarks;  
They drive off the flock and pasture it.  
3 They drive away the ass of the fatherless;  
They take the widow's ox for a pledge.  
4 They push the needy from the way;

The poor of the earth hide themselves together.

- 5 Behold, like wild asses of the desert, they go forth to their employment,  
Rising early in the morning to plunder;  
The desert furnishes food to them and their children.
- 6 They reap their grain in the field [of others],  
And they gather the vintage of the oppressor.
- 7 They cause the naked to lodge without clothing,  
And without covering in the cold.
- 8 They are wet with the showers of the mountains,  
And embrace the rock for want of a shelter.
- 9 They tear away the fatherless from the breast,  
And of the poor they exact a pledge.
- 10 They cause him to go naked without clothing;  
And they are made to carry the sheaf hungry.
- 11 They cause them to express oil within their walls;  
They tread their wine-presses, and yet suffer thirst.
- 12 From the city mortals groan,  
And the soul of the wounded crieth out;  
But God does not lay this guilt to heart.
- 13 Others hate the light;  
They know not its ways;  
They abide not in its paths.
- 14 At early dawn rises the murderer;  
He kills the poor and the needy;  
In the night he is as a thief.
- 15 The eye of the adulterer waits for the twilight,  
Saying, "No eye will see me,"  
And he puts a mask upon his face.
- 16 In the dark they dig through houses;  
In the day-time they shut themselves up;  
They are strangers to the light.
- 17 For the morning is to them the very shadow of death;  
For they are familiar with the terrors of the shadow of death.
- 18 They are like a light boat on the face of the waters;  
Accursed is their lot in the earth;  
On the way of vineyards they look not.
- 19 Drought and heat steal away the snow waters;  
The grave, in like manner, those who have sinned.

- 20 The mother soon forgets him;  
The worm feeds sweetly on him;  
He is no more remembered—  
Like a decayed tree the wicked man [gently] falls.
- 21 He oppresseth the barren, that hath not borne,  
And doeth not good to the widow.
- 22 He destroys also the mighty by his power;  
He rises up, and no one is secure of life;
- 23 God gives to him security, and he is sustained;  
Yea, his eyes are upon his ways.
- 24 They are exalted for a little time—and then are not—  
They are brought low, and are gathered [to their fathers]  
like others;  
And, like the ripe ears of grain, they are cut off.
- 25 If it be not so, who will confute me,  
And show my speech to be worthless?

## CHAPTER XXV.

*The third series in the controversy continued.*

## THE REPLY OF BILDAD TO JOB.

- 1 Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said:  
2 Dominion and fear are with Him;  
He maintaineth peace in his high places.
- 3 Is there any numbering of his armies?  
And upon whom doth not his light arise?
- 4 And how then can man be righteous before God?  
And how can he be pure that is born of a woman?
- 5 Behold, even the moon is not bright;  
And the stars are not pure in his sight.
- 6 How much less man, that is a worm!  
And the son of man, that is a reptile!

## CHAPTER XXVI.

*The third series in the controversy concluded.*

ANSWER OF JOB. Ch. xxvi.—xxxI.

- 1 Then Job answered and said:
- 2 How hast thou helped the weak,  
And strengthened the feeble arm?
- 3 How hast thou counselled the ignorant,  
And declared wisdom in abundance?
- 4 To whom hast thou uttered these words,  
And whose spirit went from thee?
- 5 The Shades tremble from beneath,  
The waters, and their inhabitants.
- 6 Sheol is naked before him,  
And Destruction hath no covering.
- 7 He stretcheth out the North over empty space,  
And hangeth the earth upon nothing.
- 8 He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds,  
And the cloud is not rent under them.
- 9 He withdraweth the face of his throne,  
And spreadeth his cloud upon it.
- 10 He hath drawn a circular bound upon the waters,  
To the confines of the light and darkness.
- 11 The pillars of heaven tremble,  
And are astonished at his rebuke.
- 12 By his power he stilleth the sea,  
And by his wisdom he scourgeth its pride.
- 13 By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens  
His hand hath formed the fleeing serpent.
- 14 Lo, these are but the outlines of his ways;  
And how faint the whisper which we hear of him!  
[Should he speak with] the thunder of his power, who  
could understand him?

## CHAP. XXVII.

- 1 Moreover, Job continued his discourse, and said:
- 2 As God liveth, who has rejected my cause,

- And the Almighty, who has embittered my spirit,  
3 As long as I have life in me,  
And the breath imparted by God is in my nostrils,  
4 My lips shall not speak wickedness,  
Nor my tongue utter deceit.  
5 Far be it from me that I should acknowledge you to be correct  
Till I die I will assert my integrity.  
6 My righteousness I hold fast, and will not loose my grasp;  
My heart shall not reproach me for any part of my life.  
7 Let mine enemy be as the wicked,  
And he that riseth up against me as the unrighteous.  
8 For what is the hope of the hypocrite when [God] cuts him off  
When he taketh away his life?  
9 Will God listen to his cry  
When trouble cometh upon him?  
10 Will he delight himself in the Almighty?  
Will he call at all times upon God?  
11 I will teach you by the operations of God;  
That which is with the Almighty I will not conceal.  
12 Behold, ye yourselves have all seen it;  
And why do you cherish such vain opinions [saying:]  
13 "This is the portion of a wicked man from God;  
"And the inheritance which oppressors receive from the Al  
mighty—  
14 "If his children are multiplied, it is for the sword;  
"And his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread.  
15 "His survivors shall be buried by Death,  
"And his widow shall not weep.  
16 "Though he heap up silver as the dust,  
"And prepare raiment as the mire,  
17 "He may prepare it, but the just shall wear it,  
"And the innocent shall share the silver.  
18 "He buildeth his house like the moth,  
"Or like a shed which a watchman maketh.  
19 "The rich man lieth down, and is not buried;  
"In the twinkling of an eye he is no more.  
20 "Terrors come upon him like waters;  
"In the night a tempest stealeth him away.  
21 "The East wind carrieth him away, and he departeth;

- “And it sweeps him away from his place.  
22 “For God shooteth at him, and does not spare;  
“He would gladly escape out of his hand.  
23 “Men clap their hands at him;  
“They hiss him away from his place.”

## CHAP. XXVIII.

- 1 Truly there is a vein for silver,  
And a place for gold where they refine it.  
2 Iron is obtained from the earth,  
And ore is fused into copper.  
3 Man putteth an end to darkness,  
And completely searches everything—  
The rocks—the thick darkness—and the shadow of death.  
4 He sinks a shaft far from a human dwelling;  
They, unsupported by the feet, hang suspended;  
Far from men they swing to and fro.  
5 The earth—out of it cometh bread;  
And when turned up beneath, it resembles fire.  
6 Its stones are the place of sapphires,  
And gold dust pertains to it.  
7 The path thereto no bird knoweth,  
And the vulture's eye hath not seen it.  
8 The fierce wild beasts have not trodden it;  
And the lion hath not walked over it.  
9 Man layeth his hand upon the flinty rock;  
He upturneth mountains from their foundations.  
10 He cutteth out canals among the rocks,  
And his eye seeth every precious thing.  
11 He restraineth the streams from trickling down,  
And bringeth hidden things to light.  
12 But where shall wisdom be found?  
And where is the place of understanding?  
13 Man knoweth not the price thereof;  
Nor can it be found in the land of the living.  
14 The deep saith, It is not in me;  
And the sea saith, It is not with me.  
15 The pure gold cannot purchase it;



- And silver cannot be weighed out as its price.  
16 It cannot be estimated by the gold of Ophir;  
By the precious onyx, or the sapphire.  
17 Gold and the crystal are not to be compared with it,  
And jewels of fine gold cannot buy it.  
18 No mention shall be made of coral or of crystal;  
For the price of wisdom is above rubies.  
19 The topaz of Cush cannot equal it;  
Nor can it be purchased with pure gold.  
20 Whence, then, cometh wisdom?  
And where is the place of understanding?  
21 Since it is concealed from the eyes of all the living  
And hidden from the fowls of the air.  
22 Destruction and Death say,  
“We have heard [only] a rumor of it with our ears.  
23 God causes its way to be understood,  
And he knows its place.  
24 For he looketh to the ends of the earth;  
[All] that is under the whole heavens he seeth.  
25 When to the winds he gave weight,  
And when he measured out the waters;  
26 When he prescribed laws for the rain,  
And a path for the thunder-flash;  
27 Then he saw it, and he made it known;  
He prepared it, and he also searched it out.  
28 And he said to man—  
“Lo! the fear of the Lord—that is wisdom;  
“And departure from evil is understanding.”

## CHAP. XXIX.

- 1 Moreover, Job continued his discourse, and said:  
2 O that I were as in months past,  
As in the days when God was my protector!  
3 When his lamp shone over my head,  
And when by his light I walked through darkness!  
4 As I was in the days of my strength,  
When God abode in my tent as a friend!  
5 When the Almighty was yet with me,

- And my children were round about me!  
6 When I washed my steps in cream,  
And the rock poured me out rivers of oil!  
7 When I went forth to the gate through the city,  
And prepared my seat in the public place,  
8 The young men saw me, and respectfully retired before me,  
And the aged arose and stood.  
9 The princes refrained from speaking,  
And laid their hand upon their mouth.  
10 The voice of counsellors was silent,  
And their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.  
11 For the ear heard, and it blessed me;  
And the eye saw, and it bore witness to me  
12 For I rescued the poor when they cried,  
And the fatherless, when there was none to help him.  
13 The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me,  
And I caused the heart of the widow to sing with joy.  
14 I put on righteousness, and it clothed me;  
And justice was my robe and diadem.  
15 I was eyes to the blind,  
And feet was I to the lame;  
16 I was a father to the poor,  
And the cause of the unknown I searched out.  
17 And I broke the teeth of the wicked,  
And from their teeth I plucked away the spoil.  
18 Then said I, "I shall die in my nest;  
"I shall multiply my days as the sand."  
19 My root was exposed to the waters,  
The dew lay all night on my branches.  
20 My glory was fresh in me,  
And my bow gathered strength in my hand.  
21 To me men gave ear, and waited,  
And were silent at my counsel.  
22 After my words they made no reply,  
And my speech dropped upon them.  
23 And they waited for me as for the rain;  
And they opened their mouths wide as for the latter rain.  
24 Did I smile upon them, they confided not [in their plans],  
And the light of my countenance they could not cast down.

- 25 I chose out their way, and sat as a chief;  
I dwelt as a king in the midst of an army,  
And as a comforter among mourners.

## CHAP. XXX.

- 1 But now they who are younger than I have me in derision,  
Whose fathers I would have disdained to set with the dogs  
of my flock.
- 2 Yet the strength of their hands, what is it to me,  
In whom vigor is perished?
- 3 On account of hunger and famine they are wholly emaciated;  
Gnawing in the wilderness—  
In the shades of desolation and waste.
- 4 Who pluck up the salt-wort among the bushes,  
And the root of the Retem is their food.
- 5 They were driven from among men;  
They shouted after them as after a thief.
- 6 They dwell in horrid valleys,  
In the holes of the earth, and in the rocks.
- 7 Among the bushes they brayed;  
Under the thorns they were huddled together.
- 8 Children of the fool; yea, children of those without a name,  
They were driven out of the land.
- 9 And now I am become their song;  
Yea, I am their by-word.
- 10 They abominate me, they stand aloof from me,  
They forbear not to spit before my face!
- 11 For they let loose all restraint, and afflict me;  
They also cast off the bridle before me.
- 12 On my right hand rises up the low brood;  
They trip up my feet;  
They cast up against me ways for my destruction.
- 13 They break up my path;  
They help forward my ruin—  
Men who have no helper!
- 14 As through a wide breach they came upon me,  
They rolled themselves tumultuously along with the ruins!
- 15 Terrors are turned upon me;

- They pursue my generous nature as the wind;  
 And my welfare has passed away as a cloud.
- 16 And now my soul is poured out upon me;  
 The days of affliction have taken hold upon me.
- 17 At night my bones are pierced through;  
 And my jaws take no rest.
- 18 By its great power [disease] has become my garment;  
 It girds me about like the mouth of my tunic.
- 19 He hath cast me into the mire,  
 And I am become like dust and ashes.
- 20 I cry unto thee, but thou dost not hear me;  
 I stand up, but thou dost not regard me.
- 21 Thou art become cruel unto me;  
 With thy strong hand thou dost persecute me.
- 22 Thou liftest me up to the wind; thou causest me to ride  
 upon it;  
 Thou causest me to melt away; thou terrifiest me.
- 23 For I know that thou wilt bring me to death;  
 And to the house appointed for all living.
- 24 Nevertheless over the ruins he will not stretch out his hand  
 If when he destroys there is prayer among them.
- 25 Did not I weep for him that was in trouble?  
 Was not my soul grieved for the poor?
- 26 When I looked for good, then evil came;  
 When I looked for light, then came darkness.
- 27 My bowels boil, and rest not;  
 The days of anguish have come upon me.
- 28 I am become black, but not by the sun;  
 I stand up and weep in the congregation.
- 29 I am become a brother to the jackal,  
 And a companion to the ostrich.
- 30 My skin is black upon me;  
 And my bones burn with heat.
- 31 My harp also is turned to mourning,  
 And my pipe to notes of grief.

## CHAP. XXXI.

- 1 I made a covenant with mine eyes;  
 How then could I think upon a virgin?

- 2 For what portion should I have from God above,  
And what would be my inheritance from the Almighty  
high?
- 3 Is not destruction for the wicked,  
And strange punishment for the workers of iniquity?
- 4 Does he not see my ways,  
And number all my steps?
- 5 If I have walked with falsehood,  
And if my foot hath hastened after deception,
- 6 Let Him weigh me in an even balance,  
And let God know my integrity.
- 7 If my steps have turned aside from the way,  
And my heart have followed my eyes,  
And any stain have cleaved to my hand,
- 8 Then may I sow, and another reap,  
And then may my harvests be rooted up!
- 9 If my heart have been enticed by a woman;  
Or if I have laid wait at my neighbor's door,
- 10 Then let my wife be a mill-wench to another,  
And let others bow down upon her.
- 11 For this is a heinous crime;  
Yea, this would be iniquity to be punished by the judges.
- 12 For it is a fire that would burn to destruction,  
And root out all my increase.
- 13 If I have refused justice to my man-servant or maid-servant  
When they had a cause with me,
- 14 What shall I do when God riseth up?  
And when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?
- 15 Did not He that made me in the womb make him?  
Did not the same One fashion us in the womb?
- 16 If I have withheld the poor from their desire,  
Or caused the eyes of the widow to fail;
- 17 If I have eaten my morsel alone,  
And the fatherless hath not eaten of it;
- 18 (For from my youth he [the orphan] grew up with me,  
with a father,  
And I was her guide [of the widow] from my earliest  
days);—
- 19 If I have seen any one perishing for want of clothing,

- Or any poor man without covering;  
 20 If his loins have not blessed me,  
 And if he has not been warmed with the fleece of my sheep;  
 21 If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless,  
 Because I saw that I had help in the gate;  
 22 Then may my shoulder fall from the blade,  
 And mine arm be broken from the upper-bone!  
 23 For destruction from God was a terror to me;  
 And before his majesty I could not do it.  
 24 If I have made gold my trust,  
 Or said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence;  
 25 If I rejoiced because my wealth was great,  
 And because my hand had found much;  
 26 If I beheld the sun when it shined,  
 And the moon advancing in its brightness,  
 27 And my heart has been secretly enticed,  
 And my mouth has kissed my hand—  
 28 This also would have been a crime to be punished by the judge,  
 For I should have denied the God who is above.  
 29 If I have rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me,  
 And exulted when evil came upon him—  
 30 But no! I have not suffered my mouth to sin  
 By imprecating a curse on his soul;—  
 31 If my domestics could not at all times say,  
 “Who will show an instance when we have not been satisfied  
 from his hospitable table?”\*  
 32 The stranger did not lodge in the street,  
 My doors I opened to the traveller;  
 33 If I have covered my transgressions as Adam,  
 By concealing my iniquity in my bosom,  
 34 Then let me be confounded before a great multitude!  
 Let the contempt of families crush me!  
 Yea, let me keep silence, and never go out of my door!  
 35 Oh that He would hear me!  
 Behold, my defence! May the Almighty answer me!  
 Would that He who contends with me would write down his  
 charge!

\* This translation is more paraphrastic than I have made in any other instance, but it was not easy to express the sense by a literal rendering.

- 36 Truly upon my shoulder would I bear it;  
I would bind it upon me as a diadem!  
37 I would tell the number of my steps to him;  
Like a prince would I approach him!  
38 If my land cry out against me,  
And the furrows likewise complain;  
39 If I have eaten its fruits without payment,  
And extorted the living of its owners;  
40 Let thistles grow up instead of wheat,  
And noxious weeds instead of barley.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

## SPEECH OF ELIHU.

- 1 So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was  
2 righteous in his own eyes. Then was kindled the anger of  
Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram;  
against Job was his anger kindled, because he vindicated  
3 himself more than God. Also against his three friends was  
his anger kindled, because they had not found an answer, and  
4 yet had condemned Job. Now Elihu had waited till Job  
5 had spoken, because they were older than himself. When  
Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these  
6 three men, then his anger was kindled. Then Elihu, the  
son of Barachel the Buzite, answered and said:  
I am young, and ye are very old;  
Therefore I was afraid,  
And durst not make known to you my opinion.  
7 I said, "Days should speak,  
"And multitude of years should teach wisdom."  
8 But there is a Spirit in man;  
And the Inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding.  
9 Great men are not always wise;  
Neither do the aged always understand what is right.  
10 Therefore I said, "Hearken unto me;  
"I also will declare mine opinion."  
11 Behold, I waited for your words;  
I listened for your arguments,  
While ye searched out what to say.

- 12 Yea, I have attended to you;  
And behold there is no one that hath refuted Job,  
Or answered his words:—
- 13 Lest ye should say, “We have found out wisdom;”—  
God only can subdue him; not man.
- 14 Now, he did not direct his discourse against me;  
And I will not answer him with speeches like yours.
- 15 They were confounded; they answered no more;  
They put words far from them.
- 16 And I waited, although they did not speak;  
Although they stood still, and answered no more.
- 17 Even I will answer now on my part;  
Even I will show mine opinion.
- 18 For I am full of words;  
The spirit within me doth constrain me.
- 19 Behold I am as wine which has no vent;  
I am ready to burst like new bottles.
- 20 I will speak that I may breathe more freely,  
I will open my lips and reply.
- 21 May I not be partial to any man’s person!  
And let me not flatter any one!
- 22 For I cannot flatter—  
In a little time my Maker will bear me away!

## CHAP. XXXIII.

- 1 Hear, therefore, O Job, I beseech thee my discourse,  
And to all my words give ear.
- 2 Behold now I open my mouth,  
My tongue now speaks in my mouth.
- 3 My words shall be in the uprightness of my heart,  
And my lips shall speak knowledge in its purity.
- 4 The Spirit of God hath made me,  
And the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.
- 5 If thou art able, answer me;  
Set [thy words] in array before me; stand firm!
- 6 Lo! I, according to thy request, am in the place of God:—  
Yet from clay am I also formed.
- 7 Lo! my terror shall not make thee afraid;



- And my hand shall not be heavy upon thee.  
8 Surely thou hast said in my hearing,  
And I have heard the voice of thy words,  
9 "I am pure, and without transgression;  
"I am innocent, and there is no iniquity in me.  
10 "Behold, He seeketh causes of enmity against me,  
"He regardeth me as his enemy,  
11 "He putteth my feet in the stocks;  
"He watcheth all my paths."  
12 Behold in this thou art not right—I will answer thee—  
For God is greater than man.  
13 Why dost thou strive against him?  
For he doth not give account of any of his doings.  
14 For God speaketh once,  
Yea, twice when man regardeth it not.  
15 In a dream, in a vision of the night,  
When deep sleep falleth upon men,  
In slumberings upon the bed,  
16 Then he openeth the ears of men,  
And sealeth instruction unto them;  
17 That He may turn man from his purpose,  
And hide pride from man.  
18 He keepeth him back from the pit,  
And his life from perishing by a violent death.  
19 He is also chastened with pain upon his bed,  
And the multitude of his bones with violent suffering,  
20 So that his life abhorreth bread,  
And his soul the choicest food.  
21 His flesh is consumed so that it cannot be seen,  
And his bones that were invisible are naked.  
22 And his soul draweth near to the pit,  
And his life to the destroyers.  
23 If there be with him a messenger [of God],  
An interpreter—one among a thousand—  
To announce to man his uprightness,  
24 Then will he be gracious unto him, and say,  
"Deliver him from going down to the pit;  
"I have found a ransom."  
25 His flesh shall become fresher than a child's;

- He shall return to the days of his youth.
- 26 He shall pray unto God and he will be merciful to him;  
And he shall see his face with joy,  
For he deals with men in equity.
- 27 He looketh attentively on man,  
And when he says,  
“ I have sinned, and acted perversely,  
“ And it has been no advantage to me,”
- 28 Then he delivers his soul from going down to the pit,  
And his life beholds the light.
- 29 Lo, all these things doeth God,  
Twice, yea thrice, with man,
- 30 That he may bring him back from the pit,  
To enjoy the light of life.
- 31 Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me!  
Keep silence, and I will speak.
- 32 If thou hast anything to say, answer me;  
Speak, for I desire to do thee justice.
- 33 But if not, do thou listen to me;  
Attend, and I will teach thee wisdom.

## CHAP. XXXIV.

- 1 And Elihu proceeded and said:  
2 Hear my words, ye wise men;  
And ye that have knowledge, give ear to me.
- 3 For the ear trieth words,  
As the mouth tasteth meat.
- 4 Let us choose to ourselves what is right;  
Let us know among ourselves what is good.
- 5 For Job hath said, “ I am righteous;  
“ And God hath taken away my right.
- 6 “ In respect to my cause I am regarded as a liar,  
“ The arrow in me is fatal—though I am free from transgression.”
- 7 What man is like Job,  
Who drinketh up scorning like water?
- 8 Who keepeth company with the workers of iniquity,  
And walketh with wicked men?

- 9 For he hath said, "It is no advantage to a man  
"When he is in friendship with God."
- 10 Wherefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding.  
Far be iniquity from God!  
And injustice far from the Almighty!
- 11 For he will render to man his work,  
And requite every man according to his way.
- 12 Surely God will not do wickedly,  
Nor will the Almighty pervert justice.
- 13 Who hath committed to him the charge of the earth;  
Or who hath arranged the whole world?
- 14 If he form such a purpose in regard to man,  
The spirit and the breath he will gather to himself;
- 15 All flesh will expire together  
And man will return to the dust.
- 16 If thou hast understanding, hear this;  
Hearken to the voice of my words!
- 17 Shall he that hateth justice govern?  
Wilt thou condemn him that is supremely just?
- 18 Is it proper to say to a king, "Thou art wicked?"  
Or to princes, "Ye are unrighteous?"
- 19 How much more to him that shows no partiality to princes,  
Nor regards the rich more than the poor?  
For they are all the work of his hands.
- 20 In a moment they die,  
And at midnight are the people shaken and pass away;—  
Yea, the mighty are destroyed without hand.
- 21 For his eyes are upon the ways of men,  
He seeth all their steps.
- 22 There is no darkness nor shadow of death  
Where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.
- 23 For he needeth not long to regard man  
To bring him before God in judgment.
- 24 He dasheth in pieces the mighty without inquiry,  
And setteth others in their stead.
- 25 For he knoweth their works,  
And he bringeth night upon them, and they are crushed.
- 26 On account of their being wicked he smiteth them  
In the presence of beholders,

- 27 Because they turned away from him,  
And had no regard to his ways,  
28 And caused the cry of the poor to come before him;—  
For the cry of the oppressed he heareth.  
29 When he giveth rest, who then can make trouble?  
And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him?  
And this in respect to a nation and an individual alike,  
30 That the wicked should no more reign,  
Nor be snares to the people.  
31 Surely it is proper to say to God,  
“I have received chastisement; I will no more offend.  
32 “What I see not, teach thou me;  
“If I have done iniquity, I will do so no more.”  
33 Shall it be from thee that God recompenses it [human conduct] because thou dost refuse?  
For thou must choose, and not I,  
And what thou knowest, speak.  
34 Men of understanding will say to me,  
And the man of wisdom who has heard me,  
35 “Job hath spoken without knowledge,  
“And his words are without wisdom.”  
36 My desire is that Job may be fully tried  
On account of his answers for wicked men.  
37 For he hath added rebellion to his sin;  
He clappeth his hands among us,  
And multiplieth his words against God.

## CHAP. XXXV.

- 1 And Elihu proceeded and said:  
2 Thinkest thou this to be right  
When thou saidst “I am more righteous than God?”  
3 For thou hast said [to thyself] “What advantage will it be to thee?  
“What profit shall I have more than if I had not sinned?”  
4 I will answer thee,  
And thy companions with thee.  
5 Look up to the heavens, and see!  
And behold the clouds, which are high above thee!

- 6 If thou sinnest, what doest thou against Him?  
And if thy transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou do to Him?
- 7 If thou art righteous, what dost thou give Him?  
Or what does He receive at thy hand?
- 8 Thy wickedness can injure only a man like thyself.  
And thy righteousness profit only a son of man.
- 9 Men are made to cry out [indeed] on account of the multitude of their wrongs;  
They cry out on account of the arm of the mighty.
- 10 But none saith, "Where is God my maker,  
"Who in the night of calamity giveth songs?"
- 11 "Who would teach us more than the beasts of the earth,  
"And make us wiser than the fowls of heaven."
- 12 Then they cry aloud, but he giveth no answer,  
On account of the pride of [such] wicked men.
- 13 For God will not hear vain supplication,  
Nor will the Almighty regard it.
- 14 Although thou sayest that thou canst not see him,  
Yet justice is with him; only wait thou for him.
- 15 But now the visitations of his anger are almost as nothing;  
And he has not taken cognizance with strictness of transgression.
- 16 Job hath opened his mouth without understanding;  
He hath multiplied words without knowledge.

## CHAP. XXXVI.

- 1 Elihu also proceeded and said:  
2 Bear with me a little farther, and I will show you,  
For there is much yet to be said for God.  
3 I will bring my knowledge from afar,  
And will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.  
4 For truly my words shall not be false;  
One perfect in knowledge is with thee.  
5 Behold, God is great, and despiseth not any;  
Great is he in strength of understanding.  
6 He preserveth not the life of the wicked;  
He doeth justice to the oppressed.

- 7 He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous;  
But with kings are they upon the throne,  
And he establisheth them for ever, and they are exalted.
- 8 And if [the righteous] are bound in fetters,  
And holden in the cords of affliction,
- 9 Then he showeth them their deeds,  
And their transgressions that they have been great.
- 10 He openeth also their ear to instruction,  
And commandeth them to turn from iniquity.
- 11 If they obey and serve him they spend their days in prosperity  
And their years in pleasures.
- 12 But if they will not obey they perish with the sword,  
And they die without knowledge.
- 13 But the hypocrites in heart treasure up wrath;  
They cry not [to God] when he bindeth them.
- 14 They die in their youth;  
And their life [is closed] with the grossly impure.
- 15 He delivereth the afflicted in their distress,  
And openeth their ears in their trials.
- 16 In like manner he would have removed thee from a pent-up  
way  
To a broad place where there is no straitness,  
And the provision of thy table would have been full of fatness.
- 17 But if thou dost fully hold the sentiments of the wicked,  
Such sentiments and justice will be close together.\*
- 18 For there is wrath; beware lest he take thee away with his  
stroke;  
Then a great ransom cannot save thee.
- 19 Will he esteem thy riches?  
No! not gold, nor all the abundance of wealth.
- 20 Long not for the night,  
To go to the people beneath them.
- 21 Take heed! regard not iniquity,  
For this hast thou preferred to affliction.
- 22 Behold, God is exalted in his power;  
Who is a teacher like him?
- 23 Who hath appointed him his way?

\* Or, will sustain each other.

- And who can say, "Thou hast done iniquity?"  
 24 Forget not thou to magnify his work  
 On which men look.\*  
 25 All men see it;  
 Mortals behold it from afar.  
 26 Lo, God is great, and we know him not;  
 The number of his years is unsearchable.  
 27 For he draweth up the drops of water,  
 They distil rain in its vapor,  
 28 Which the clouds pour down;  
 They pour it upon man in abundance.  
 29 Who also can understand the outspreading of the clouds,  
 And the fearful thunderings in his pavilion?  
 30 Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it;  
 He also covereth the depths of the sea.  
 31 By these he executeth judgment upon the people;  
 By these also he giveth food in abundance.  
 32 With his hands he covereth the lightning,  
 And commandeth it where to strike.  
 33 He pointeth out to it his friends—  
 The collecting of his wrath is upon the wicked.

## CHAP. XXXVII.

- 1 At this also my heart palpitates,  
 And is moved out of its place.  
 2 Hear, O hear the thunder of his voice!  
 The muttering thunder that goes from his mouth!  
 3 He directeth it under the whole heaven,  
 And his lightning to the ends of the earth.  
 4 After it, the thunder roareth;  
 He thundereth with the voice of his majesty,  
 And he will not restrain the tempest when his voice is heard.  
 5 God thundereth marvellously with his voice;  
 He doeth wonders which we cannot comprehend.  
 6 For he saith to the snow, "Be thou on the earth,"  
 To the pouring forth of the rain, also; even the pouring forth  
 of his mighty rains.

\* That is, the works of the visible creation.

- 7 He sealet up the hand of every man,  
That all the men whom he has made may have knowledge.
- 8 Then the beasts go into their dens,  
And abide in their caverns.
- 9 Out of the South cometh the whirlwind,  
And cold out of the North.
- 10 By the breath of God the frost is produced,  
And the broad waters become compressed.
- 11 Serenity also expels the thick cloud;  
His light scatters the cloud,
- 12 And it is turned about by his direction,  
To execute all that he has commanded upon the face of the  
habitable world.
- 13 Whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy,  
He causeth it to come.
- 14 Give ear, O Job, to this;  
Stand and consider the wonderful works of God.
- 15 Dost thou know how God arranges these things,  
And how he causes the lightning to flash from the dark cloud?
- 16 Dost thou understand how the clouds are suspended,  
The wondrous works of Him that is perfect in wisdom?
- 17 How thy garments become warm,  
When he maketh the earth sultry by the South wind?
- 18 Hast thou aided him in spreading out the firmament,  
That stands strong, like a molten mirror.
- 19 Teach us what we shall say unto him;  
We cannot address him by reason of darkness.
- 20 Shall it be told him that I have presumed to speak?  
Surely if a man should speak to him, he would be destroyed.
- 21 And now—men cannot look upon the bright splendor that is  
on the clouds,  
For the wind passeth along, and maketh an opening!
- 22 Golden splendor approaches from the North:—  
How fearful is the majesty of God!
- 23 The Almighty!—we cannot find him out!  
Great in power, and in justice, and vast in righteousness!  
He does not oppress!
- 24 Wherefore men should be filled with awe;  
The wise in heart he does not regard.



## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

JEHOVAH'S FIRST ADDRESS TO JOB. Ch. xxxviii., xxxix.

- 1 Then JEHOVAH answered Job out of the storm, and said:
- 2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?
- 3 Gird up now thy loins like a man;  
I will put questions to thee, and do thou inform me.
- 4 Where wast thou when I founded the earth?  
Declare if thou hast knowledge!
- 5 Who then fixed the measure of it? For thou knowest!  
Who stretched the line upon it?
- 6 Upon what are its foundations settled?  
Or who laid its corner-stone?
- 7 When the morning stars sang together,  
And all the sons of God shouted for joy?
- 8 Who shut up the sea with doors  
In its bursting forth as from the womb?
- 9 When I made the cloud its garment,  
And swathed it in thick darkness?
- 10 I measured out for it my limits,  
And fixed its bars and doors;
- 11 And said, 'Thus far shalt thou come, but no further,  
And here shall thy proud waves be stayed!'
- 12 Hast thou, in thy life, given commandment to the morning,  
Or caused the dawn to know its place,
- 13 That it may seize on the far corners of the earth,  
And scatter the robbers before it?
- 14 It turns itself along, like clay under a seal,  
And all things stand forth as if in gorgeous apparel.
- 15 But from the wicked their light is withheld,  
And the high arm is broken.
- 16 Hast thou penetrated to the springs of the sea,  
And hast thou walked about in the recesses of the deep?
- 17 Have the gates of death been opened to thee,  
Or hast thou seen the gates of the shadow of death?
- 18 Hast thou observed the breadth of the earth?

Declare, if thou knowest it all.

- 19 Where is the way to the dwelling-place of light?  
And the darkness—where is its place—
- 20 That thou couldst conduct it to its limits,  
And that thou shouldst know the path to its dwelling?
- 21 Didst thou know this because thou wast then born,  
Or because the number of thy days is great?
- 22 Hast thou been into the store-houses of snow,  
Or seen the store-houses of hail,
- 23 Which I have reserved until the time of trouble,  
To the day of battle and war?
- 24 By what way is the light distributed,  
And how is the East wind spread abroad upon the earth?
- 25 Who hath divided for the shower a channel,  
And who hath made a path for the thunder-flash,
- 26 To give rain to a land where there is no man,  
Upon the desert where no one dwells;
- 27 To saturate the desert and the barren place,  
And to cause the bud of the tender herb to germinate?
- 28 Hath the rain a father?  
And who hath begotten the drops of the dew?
- 29 From whose womb came the ice?  
The hoar-frost of heaven—who gave it birth?
- 30 The waters are hid as under a stone;  
And the surface of the deep becomes a solid mass.
- 31 Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades,  
Or loose the bands of Orion?
- 32 Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season,  
Or lead forth the Bear with her young?
- 33 Knowest thou the laws of the heavens,  
Or hast thou appointed their dominion over the earth?
- 34 Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds,  
So that the overflowings of the waters shall cover thee?
- 35 Canst thou send forth the lightnings, so that they shall go,  
And shall say to thee, "Here we are?"
- 36 Who hath imparted understanding to thy inward parts?  
Or given intelligence to thy mind?
- 37 Who can number the clouds by wisdom?  
And who can empty the bottles of heaven,

- 38 When the dust flows into a molten mass,  
And the clods cleave fast together?  
39 Canst thou hunt for the lion his prey?  
And the hunger of the young lions canst thou satisfy.  
40 When they crouch in their dens,  
And lie in wait in the thicket?  
41 Who provideth for the raven his food,  
When his young cry unto God,  
And wander for lack of food?

## CHAP. XXXIX.

- 1 Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring  
forth?  
Or canst thou observe the birth-throes of the hind?  
2 Canst thou number the months that they fulfil?  
Knowest thou the season when they bring forth?  
3 They bow themselves; they give birth to their young;  
They cast forth their sorrows.  
4 Their young ones increase in strength;  
They grow up in the wilderness;  
They go from them and return no more.  
5 Who hath sent forth the wild ass free?  
Or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?  
6 Whose home I have made the wilderness,  
And his dwellings the barren land.  
7 He scorneth the uproar of the city;  
The cry of the driver he heedeth not.  
8 The range of the mountains is his pasture;  
He searcheth after every green thing.  
9 Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee?  
Will he abide through the night at thy crib?  
10 Wilt thou bind him with his band in the furrow?  
And will he harrow the valleys after thee?  
11 Wilt thou trust him because his strength is great,  
Or wilt thou commit thy labor to him?  
12 Wilt thou have confidence in him to bring in thy grain,  
And to gather it to thy threshing-floor?  
13 A wing of exulting fowls moves joyfully!

Is it the wing and the plumage of the stork?

14 She leaveth her eggs upon the ground,

And upon the dust she warmeth them,

15 And forgetteth that the foot may crush them,

And that the wild beast may break them.

16 She is hardened towards her young, as if they were not hers;

In vain is her travail, and without solicitude;

17 Because God hath withheld wisdom from her,

And hath not imparted to her understanding.

18 In the time when she raiseth herself up on high

She laugheth at the horse and his rider.

19 Hast thou given the horse his strength?

Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?

20 Dost thou make him leap as the locust?

How terrible is the glory of his nostrils!

21 He paweth in the valley; he exulteth in his strength;

He goeth forth into the midst of arms.

22 He laugheth at fear, and is nothing daunted;

And he turneth not back from the sword.

23 Upon him rattleth the quiver,

The glittering spear and the lance.

24 In his fierceness and rage he devoureth the ground,

And will no longer stand still when the trumpet sounds

25 When the trumpet sounds he saith "Aha!"

And from afar he snuffeth the battle—

The war-cry of the princes, and the battle-shout.

26 Is it by thy understanding that the hawk flieth,

And spreadeth his wings towards the South?

27 Is it at thy command that the eagle mounteth up,

And that he buildeth his nest on high?

28 He inhabiteth the rock, and abideth there—

Upon the crag of the rock, and the high fortress.

29 From thence he spieth out his prey;

His eyes discern it from afar:

30 His young ones greedily gulp down blood;

And where the slain are, there is he.

## CHAPTER XL.

JEHOVAH'S SECOND ADDRESS TO JOB. Ch. xl., xli.

- 1 Moreover JEHOVAH answered Job, and said:
- 2 Will he that would enter into an argument with the Almighty now instruct him?  
Will he that wished to carry his cause before God now reply?
- 3 Then Job answered JEHOVAH and said:
- 4 Behold, I am vile! What can I answer thee?  
I will lay my hand upon my mouth.
- 5 Once did I speak; but I will not answer again:  
Yea, twice; but I will add no more.
- 6 Then JEHOVAH answered Job out of the whirlwind and said:
- 7 Gird up now thy loins like a man!  
I will ask of thee, and do thou instruct me!
- 8 Wilt thou reverse my judgment?  
Wilt thou show that I am wrong because thou art righteous?
- 9 Hast thou an arm like God?  
Or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?
- 10 Adorn thyself now with grandeur and majesty,  
And array thyself with splendor and glory.
- 11 Let loose the fury of thy wrath!  
Look upon every one that is proud and abase him!
- 12 Look upon every one that is proud and bring him low!  
Yea, tread down the wicked in their place!
- 13 Hide them in the dust together!  
Bind them in the dungeon!
- 14 Then will I also give thee praise,  
For thine own right hand can save thee.
- 15 Behold now Behemoth which I have made, as well as thyself;  
He feedeth on grass like the ox.
- 16 Behold now his strength is in his loins;  
And his vigor in the muscles of his belly.
- 17 He bendeth his tail like the cedar;  
The sinews of his haunches are twisted together.
- 18 His bones are like strong pieces of brass:

His bones are like bars of iron.

- 19 He is chief among the works of God;  
He that made him has furnished him [as] with a sword.
- 20 For the mountains bring him forth food,  
Where all the beasts of the field play.
- 21 He lieth under the lotus-trees,  
In the covert of the reeds and fens.
- 22 The lotus-trees cover him with their shade;  
The willows of the brook compass him about.
- 23 Lo! should a river rush upon him, he is not alarmed;  
He is unmoved should the Jordan rush upon his mouth
- 24 Who can take him when he is on his guard?  
Or when taken in snares, who can pierce his nose?

# CHAP. XLI.

- 1 Canst thou draw forth Leviathan with an hook?  
Or press down his tongue with a cord?
- 2 Canst thou put a rope into his nose?  
Or pierce his jaw with a ring?
- 3 Will he make many supplications unto thee?  
Will he speak soft words unto thee?
- 4 Will he make a covenant with thee?  
Canst thou take him for a servant for ever?
- 5 Canst thou play with him as with a bird?  
Or canst thou bind him for thy maidens?
- 6 Do men in company make a banquet of him?  
Do they divide him among the merchants?
- 7 Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons?  
Or his head with fish-spears?
- 8 Lay thine hand upon him; remember the fierce conflict:—  
Thou wilt not do it again.
- 9 Behold the hope of [taking] him is vain;  
Is it not dissipated at his very appearance?
- 10 None is so courageous that he dare arouse him;—  
And who then is he that can stand before me?
- 11 Who can come upon me by surprise that I should recompense him?  
All under the whole heavens is mine.
- 12 I will not be silent concerning his parts,

- And his power, and the fitness of his armature.  
13 Who can strip off the surface of his garment?  
Who can come near to the doubling of his jaws?  
14 Who can open the doors of his face?  
The rows of his teeth are terrible.  
15 His strong shields are his pride—  
Shut up together as with a close seal.  
16 They are joined one to another,  
So that no air can come between them.  
17 They cleave fast to each other;  
They take hold on one another so that they cannot be separated.  
18 In his sneezing light is caused to shine,  
And his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.  
19 Out of his mouth go forth torches;  
Sparks of fire leap forth.  
20 Out of his nostrils goeth smoke,  
As from a boiling pot or caldron.  
21 His breath kindleth coals,  
And a flame issueth out of his mouth.  
22 In his neck dwelleth strength;  
Before him danceth Terror.  
23 The dewlaps of his flesh cleave fast together;  
They are firm upon him; they cannot be moved.  
24 His heart is solid like a stone;  
Yea, solid like the nether millstone.  
25 When he riseth up the mighty are afraid;  
Yea, they lose themselves from terror.  
26 The sword of him that attacks him will not adhere;  
Nor will the spear, the dart, or the javelin.  
27 He regardeth iron as straw,  
And brass as rotten wood.  
28 The arrow will not put him to flight;  
Sling-stones turn themselves into stubble in respect to him.  
29 Clubs are regarded by him as stubble;  
He laugheth at the shaking of a spear.  
30 Under him are sharp potsherds;  
He spreadeth out his rough parts upon the mire.  
31 He maketh the deep to boil like a pot;

He maketh the sea like a pot of ointment.

- 32 After him he leaves a shining path—  
So that one would think the deep to be hoary.  
33 Upon the earth there is not his like;  
He is made to be destitute of fear.  
34 On every high thing he looketh down,  
King over all the sons of pride.

## CHAPTER XLII.

THE RESPONSE AND PENITENT CONFESSION OF JOB. Vs. 1—6.

- 1 Then Job answered JEHOVAH, and said:  
2 I know that thou canst do everything,  
And that no purpose of thine can be prevented.  
3 “Who is he [indeed] that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?”  
I have indeed uttered what I understood not;  
Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.  
4 Hear then, I beseech thee, and I will speak;  
I will ask thee, and do thou instruct me.  
5 I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear,  
But now mine eye seeth thee;  
6 Wherefore I abhor myself,  
And repent in dust and ashes.



## PART III.

THE CONCLUSION IN PROSE. Vs. 7—17.

7 And it came to pass after JEHOVAH had spoken these words to Job, that JEHOVAH said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is kindled against thee and thy two friends, for ye have not spoken concerning me that which is right, as my servant Job  
8 hath. Therefore take for yourselves seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job and offer for yourselves a burnt-offering; and Job my servant shall pray for you—for to him will I have regard—lest I should recompense to you your folly. For ye have not spoken concerning me that which is right, as  
9 my servant Job hath." So Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, went and did as JEHOVAH commanded them; and JEHOVAH had respect to  
10 Job. And JEHOVAH turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends, and JEHOVAH gave him double of what he had  
11 before. Then came to him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all his former acquaintances, and ate bread with him in his house; and they condoled with him and comforted him over all the evil that JEHOVAH had brought upon him; and every one  
12 gave him a piece of money, and every one a ring of gold. So JEHOVAH blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; for he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a  
13 thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses. He had also  
14 seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name of the first Jemima, of the second Kezia, and of the third Keren-  
15 happuch. And in all the land were no women found so beautiful as the daughters of Job; and their father gave them an inherit-  
16 ance among their brethren. And Job lived after this an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even  
17 four generations. And Job died, being old and full of days.

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